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CHAUCER AND LUCAN'S *PHARSALIA*

It has long been recognized that Chaucer had an acquaintance with Lucan's *Pharsalia*, but no definite effort has been made to determine to what extent he made use of it in his own writings. Professor Lowes referred to the relationship between the two poets in an article in the *Nation*¹ and indicated some investigations that he expects to prosecute with regard to Chaucer's knowledge of Lucan through translations when the cessation of hostilities will permit his examination of some MSS in Europe. As Professor Lowes says, Chaucer undoubtedly knew the Latin original: Though perhaps Chaucer was not a scholar in the modern sense, or even in the mediaeval—and for this let us be thankful—there is abundant evidence that his knowledge of the Latin classics was extensive. These investigations of Mr. Lowes with regard to Chaucer's relation not only to Lucan but also to Ovid and the other classical writers will certainly prove of great significance in estimating the diverse elements that entered into Chaucer's literary equipment. Meanwhile it may not be unprofitable to carry forward a critical comparison between Chaucer and his Latin originals which was undertaken some years ago, and some results of which have been printed in previous notes and articles.

In all of Chaucer's work there are four references to Lucan² by name: one in the *Troilus and Criseyde*, one in the *House of Fame*, one in the *Tale of the Man of Lawe*, and the fourth in the *Monk's Tale*.

¹ *Nation*, Supplement (December 21, 1916), p. 2.

² See Skeat, *Oxford Chaucer*, III, 279.

In the *Troilus and Criseyde* there is only the line giving the names of the great poets,

Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace.

[*Troilus*, V, 1792.]

Here Lucan's name is joined with one, Homer, whose work Chaucer evidently did not know at first hand, and with three whom he did know, Virgil, Ovid, and Statius. This line, therefore, cannot justify any inference about Chaucer's acquaintance with Lucan.

In the *House of Fame* there is apparently a little more to go upon:

Tho saugh I, on a piler hy,
Of yren wrought ful sternely,
The grete poete, daun Lucan,
And on his shoulders bar up than,
As highe as that I mighte see,
The fame of Julius and Pompee.

[*H.F.*, 1497-1502.]

It is evident from this passage that Chaucer knew that Lucan in the *Pharsalia* had much to say about Caesar and Pompey. Whether Chaucer knew this from his own reading of the Latin poet or got his information from someone else, this passage does not indicate.

In the *Tale of the Man of Lawe* Chaucer refers to Lucan as describing a great triumph of Julius Caesar:

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Julius
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a bost.

[*B* 1, 400-401.]

Apparently the same idea is in Chaucer's mind when he says in the *Monk's Tale*:

To Rome agayn repaireth Julius
With his triumphe, laureat ful hye.

[*B* 1, 3909-10.]

Upon this point of Chaucer's attributing an account of a triumph of Julius Caesar to Lucan, Professor Skeat says: "See Lucan's *Pharsalia*, iii. 79: 'Perdidit o qualem vincendo plura triumphum.' But Chaucer's reference, evidently made at random, is unlucky. Lucan laments that he had no triumph to record."¹ Professor Lounsbury explains Chaucer's mistake about the triumph as due to careless

¹ See Skeat, *Oxford Chaucer*, V, 153.

reading of Lucan.¹ The fact is, of course, that Lucan does not give any account of a triumph of Caesar because of his victory over Pompey, for Caesar never celebrated such a triumph. One can see, however, by reading the following passage in Lucan how Professor Lounsbury's suggestion might be correct:

Pro, si remeasset in urbem,
Gallorum tantum populis arctoque subacta,
Quam seriem rerum longa praemittere pompa,
Quas potuit belli facies! ut vincula Rheno
Oceanoque daret, celsos ut Gallia currus
Nobilis et flavis sequeretur mixta Britannis!
Perdidit o qualem vincendo plura triumphum!

[*Pharsalia* iii. 73-79.]

But two other passages in the *Pharsalia*, to which attention has not been called, might much more directly have suggested to Chaucer that Caesar expected to enjoy a triumph after his defeat of Pompey. The inference, therefore, that he did enjoy the triumph would be all the more natural. The first passage is:

Campis prostrata iacere
Agmina nostra putes; nec enim felicibus armis
Misceri damnata decet, partemque triumphi
Captos ferre tui; turba haec sua fata peregit,
Hoc petimus, victos ne tecum vincere cogas.

[*Pharsalia* iv. 358-62.]

Here the soldiers who have deserted Pompey's side and fled to Caesar are begging not to be made a part of Caesar's triumphal procession, assuming apparently that a triumph will certainly be enjoyed by him.

The second passage is a boast of Caesar himself in an address to his mutinous soldiers:

Anne fugam Magni tanta cum classe secuntur
Hesperiae gentes, nobis victoria turbam
Non dabit, impulsi tantum quae praemia belli
Auferat et vestri rapta mercede laboris
Lauriferos nullo comitetur vulnere currus?
Vos despecta, senes, exhaustaque sanguine turba
Cernetis nostros iam plebs Romana triumphos.

[*Pharsalia* v. 328-34.]

¹ Lounsbury, *Studies in Chaucer*, II, 254.

The first three stanzas "de Julio Cesare" in the *Monk's Tale* are a rapid summing up of the main facts in Lucan's *Pharsalia*. The lines

Up roos he, Julius the conquerour,
That wan al th' occident by lond and see,

appear to be Chaucer's condensation of Lucan's rather long roll call of the various Gallic and Germanic tribes that were subject to Caesar.¹ Lucan begins by saying,

Caesar, ut acceptum tam prono milite bellum
Fataque ferre videt, ne quo lanquore moretur
Fortunam, sparsos per Gallica rura cohortes
Evocat et Romam motis petit undique signis.

After enumerating the tribes Lucan tells of Caesar's advance into Italy and the terror that his coming created; and he is to be greatly feared because,

Hunc inter Rhenum populos Alpemque jacentes
Finibus arctois patriaque a sede revolsos,
Pone sequi jussamque feris a gentibus urbem
Romano spectanti rapi.

In the following lines about Pompey,

That of th' orient hadde al the chivalrye
As fer as that the day beginneth dawe,

Chaucer apparently is thinking of Lucan's exaltation of Pompey. In the *Pharsalia* Lucan represents Pompey, his hero, as the leader of all the nations of the East which have flocked to his standard because he is so great and famous as a general. In trying to arouse his soldiers to battle Pompey boasts of the nations that he has conquered.² A little later Lucan says that Pompey, when all hope in Italy is gone, looks toward the East and sends his oldest son to arouse the nations of the Orient.³

Though Pompey is his hero, Lucan of necessity gives Julius Caesar much prominence in his story. Pompey and Caesar are the two opposing forces struggling for control of the known world. Chaucer dramatically presents one as the conqueror of the Occident and the other as the leader of all the forces of the Orient.

In the line

O mighty Cesar, that in Thessalye,

Chaucer indicates his knowledge of the country where the contest between Caesar and Pompey took place. The fact that Lucan

¹ See *Pharsalia* l. 393-405.

² *Ibid.* ll. 583 ff.

³ *Ibid.* 628-44; see also vii. 360-64.

makes so much of Thessaly,¹ giving an account of its inhabitants, boundaries, mountains, and rivers, served no doubt to impress the name upon Chaucer's mind.

That the *Pharsalia* was in Chaucer's mind when he was writing this story of Julius Caesar seems clear from the fact that Chaucer stops his account of Caesar to bewail the fate of Pompey, of whom Lucan makes so much. In fact it is Pompey's fate with which the *Pharsalia* concerns itself.

But now a litel whyl I wol biwaille
This Pompeius, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fleigh at this bataille;
I seye, oon of his men, a fals traitour
His heed of smoot, to winnen him favour
Of Julius, and him the heed he broghte.
Allas Pompey, of th' orient conquerour
That fortune unto swich a fyn thee broghte!

Of the three authors, Lucan, Suetonius, and Valerius, to whom Chaucer refers the reader in the closing stanza of this story of Julius Caesar, it is easy to see from which one he derived the very concrete statement that one of Pompey's own men cut off his head. Suetonius² merely says that Pompey was killed before Caesar's arrival. Valerius Maximus,³ though mentioning the fact that Pompey's head was cut off, attributes it to Egyptian treachery. But Lucan gives in full the details which Chaucer evidently had in mind.⁴

It would seem clear enough that Chaucer names his authorities correctly when he says:

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende
And to Sweton, and to Valerie also
That of this storie wryten word and ende.

One of Chaucer's feats was condensing in brief form for his contemporaries the epic poems of some of the popular Latin poets. We find him giving a summary of the entire *Aeneid* in the first book of the *House of Fame*, and of the *Thebaid* toward the end of the *Troilus and Criseyde*. In the *Monk's Tale* he has summarized in three stanzas

¹ *Pharsalia* vi. 333-412.

² Suetonius *XII Caesares*, C. *Julius Caesar* 35.

³ Valerius Maximus *De factis et dictis Memorabilibus*, v. 1, Sec. 10.

⁴ *Pharsalia* viii. 592-673.

practically all the important points in Lucan's *Pharsalia*. The rest of the story of Julius Caesar, which Lucan, of course, does not tell—how Brutus Cassius, as Chaucer calls him, attacked Caesar, and how Caesar drew his mantle about him while dying—Chaucer obtained, as he says, from Suetonius¹ and Valerius Maximus.²

If Lucan was a popular poet in the Middle Ages³ and Chaucer was acquainted with his poem, the question naturally arises, Why did Chaucer make so little use of Lucan in his works? The answer is not far to seek. Lucan's subject-matter and style in the *Pharsalia* were not such as to make an appeal to our English story-teller poet. Lucan's long speeches, eloquent as they are, smack of the rhetorician's art and seem to be introduced to display the poet's power of declamation, as do also the long descriptions of peoples and places in which he indulges. Consider, for instance, Lucan's ethnological and geographical account of Thessaly. To Lucan, Pompey was the representative of freedom, which was hopelessly crushed by Julius Caesar's superior force. Chaucer, however, had no concern with the political or historical events of antiquity, for

They are gone: ay, ages long ago.

For instance, Chaucer cared nothing for Aeneas as the reputed founder of Rome and the ancestor of Augustus—matters of prime importance to Virgil—but he was intensely concerned with him as the lover and deserter of Dido. The constant appeal of Ovid's poetry to Chaucer consists in the varied manifestations presented by "Venus clerk" of the eternal human passions. Hence Chaucer's very much more extensive use of Ovid than of any other classical poet.

Though Chaucer doubtless enjoyed reading "the grete poete, daun Lucan," he found little to appropriate from his writings. Lucan's eloquent apostrophes to Pompey as the apostle of freedom made no appeal to a narrative poet like Chaucer, whose primary interest was in telling his story. The element of "human interest," for which Chaucer had so keen an appreciation, was not to be found in Lucan's *Pharsalia*.

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¹ Suetonius *XII Caesares*, J. Caesar 82.

² Valerius Maximus *De factis et dictis Memorabilibus* iv. 5.

³ Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, I, 641.

COLERIDGE AS A PHILOLOGIAN

Samuel Taylor Coleridge—logician, metaphysician, bard—was also, according to his lights, a scholar. The great and disjointed corpus of his works is freighted to a surprising degree with learning real or feigned, and his contemporaries were wont to be not less amazed at his erudition than they were startled at the occasional wildness of judgment and apparent indifference to exactitude which attended it. No survey of Coleridge's attainments in the field of literary and philological as opposed to philosophical scholarship has hitherto been made. The subject is, however, an interesting one, and an examination of his pretensions and accomplishments, a somewhat careful testing of the fact and fancy in his scholarly pronouncements, besides illustrating a comparatively unregarded aspect of his relation to his age, will be found to open a new approach to the understanding of his peculiar intellectual constitution and to throw important light on his critical and imaginative work.

We may consider at the outset his own attitude toward the sort of philological study in which at various periods of his life he found himself deeply engaged. The following passage, written at Göttingen in 1799, affords important evidence as to his point of view:

My God! a miserable poet must he be, and a despicable metaphysician, whose acquirements have not cost him more trouble and reflection than all the learning of Tooke, Porson, and Parr united. With the advantage of a great library, learning is nothing—methinks, merely a sad excuse for being idle. Yet a man gets reputation by it, and reputation gets money; and for reputation I don't care a damn, but money—yes—money I must get by all honest ways. Therefore at the end of two or three years, if God grant me life, expect to see me come out with some horribly learned book, full of manuscript quotations from Laplandish and Patagonian authors, possibly on the striking resemblance of the Sweogothian and Sanscrit languages, and so on.¹

In regarding the labor of thought as infinitely more severe than that of acquisition Coleridge is undoubtedly faithful to his own

¹ *Letters* (edited by E. H. Coleridge), p. 299.

experience. The pretense of a purely commercial object in his studies is, I think, affectation. Certain it is that he always considered sound knowledge an indispensable basis of poetic as well as of critical achievement. In a letter of 1796 to Joseph Cottle he gives the following notable prescription for the preparation of an epic poem:

I should not think of devoting less than twenty years to an epic poem. Ten years to collect my materials, and warm my mind with universal science. I should be a tolerable mathematician. I would thoroughly understand Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Optics, and Astronomy; Botany, Metallurgy, Fossilism; Chemistry; Geology, Anatomy, Medicine; then the mind of man in all Travels, Voyages and Histories. So would I spend ten years; the next five in the composition of the poem, and the five last in the correction of it.¹

Ludicrously Coleridgian as this may sound, it reveals an attitude of mind which is sincere and characteristic, and it serves to direct attention to a genuine and independent scholarly consciousness in Coleridge, as much at variance with the common conception of him as mere heir to misty speculations and poetic dreams, as it was with certain tendencies in his strangely contradictory nature. He differs sharply, be it observed, from other outstanding figures in the romantic group. For pure antiquarianism like that of Scott he had no interest. Neither is he led to seek the past in the service of the pictorial imagination. His study was directed rather to the search for truth; it embraced physical science as well as language, literature, and metaphysics; and it resulted in an attitude essentially akin to that of the great founders of modern scholarship. Whatever his shortcomings may have been, Coleridge was yet touched by the scientific viewpoint, as evidenced in a sense of the need of methods and standards for the testing of literary and historic fact, and of the importance of correct manuscript readings, of more accurate translation and interpretation made in the light of fuller linguistic knowledge, and of the historical approach to literature through an understanding of the conditions surrounding it.

For the practice of an exact and far-reaching scholarship Coleridge had the initial advantage of a really competent training. The rigid classical discipline of Christ's Hospital was completed at Cambridge, and in both institutions Coleridge distinguished himself, save for a

¹ Cottle's *Early Recollections*, I (1837), 192.

single year of unaccountable mental disorganization, by his effort and his proficiency. The zeal of acquisition attended him also during the subsequent era of pantisocracy and love, when his association with Robert Southey, while it deepened his enthusiasm, somewhat altered its direction.¹

It is, however, the sojourn in Germany which is really epoch-making in Coleridge's intellectual development, and that in a way which appears not to have been clearly recognized by his biographers. It is not simply that he was among the first of Englishmen to value contemporary German literature, for here William Taylor, of Norwich, had been his predecessor in the field, while DeQuincey and Carlyle were soon to go far beyond him. What distinguishes Coleridge's contact with modern Germany was the fact that he felt more than others its intellectual currents, not in philosophy alone,² but in science and literary scholarship as well. It is of quite as much importance that he submitted himself for a half-year to the discipline of one of its most progressive universities, at the moment when the fruits of the early development of a new learning were just beginning to be felt, as it is that he met and talked with Klopstock. Although Coleridge had been led to Germany in the first instance by the attraction of Schiller, Voss, and Wieland, he actually concerned himself, after a brief period spent in mastering the language, scarcely at all with the writers after Lessing.

The avowed object of the expedition was to acquire the language and "to furnish ourselves with a tolerable knowledge of natural science." Separating from the Wordsworths after a few days in Hamburg, Coleridge went into scholarly retirement at Ratzeburg and set about the study of German according to a definitely conceived and excellent theory of linguistic acquisition.³ In February, 1799, he matriculated at Göttingen and settled down for five months of practically uninterrupted study.

Coleridge's choice of a university is of considerable importance. Göttingen was at this time pre-eminently the German university for

¹ The record of the books drawn by Coleridge and Southey from the Bristol Library (see *Chamber's Journal*, 1890, p. 75) gives the earliest evidences of Coleridge's interest in the literature of Italy and the North and in the minor Elizabethan drama.

² Coleridge remarks (*Biographia literaria* [ed. Shawcross], I, 141) that he became acquainted with the German philosophers for the most part "long afterwards."

³ See *Biographia literaria*, chap. x, note.

English students, and Coleridge, through his special relations to the faculty, was in a particularly favorable position to feel the scholarly and intellectual impulses of the institution.¹ Göttingen was then the most modern and universal, as it was the youngest, of the German universities. The presence of Gesner, followed in 1763 by Heyne, had made it the leader of the new humanism which was revolutionizing the study of the classics in the German universities² and was already producing its effect on German literature and thought. There is evidence in Coleridge's later work that he felt the stimulus of these new ideals. The cultural view of ancient literature, championed by Heyne, involving the idea of considering the classics in relation to the total civilization of antiquity—its customs, mythology, art, and thought—was in entire accord with Coleridge's sympathies and interests. Something of this he may indeed have obtained from Blackwell, Wood, and other English sources, but in general it was the merely learned attitude which prevailed in the English universities where he had received his initiation into classical studies, while in Göttingen, under the leadership of Heyne, the bent of scholarship had been determined by the more liberal humanism of the new era. Winckleman and Herder had been Heyne's friends and correspondents, Wolf was his pupil, and it is unlikely that Coleridge should have escaped the enthusiasm of the place and hour. The fruits of the historical attitude in general and, as we shall see, of the new classical scholarship in particular are apparent everywhere in his criticism.

Of greater importance, however, for Coleridge's future development was his contact with the more novel current of German scholarship which was just beginning to be felt in Göttingen. The championship of the older German literature as an object of appreciation and study and the corresponding philological interest in the Teutonic dialects were, it is true, in the hands of other men than the Göttingen professors. A regular professor of German literature was not

¹ Coleridge sought out Heyne, librarian and reigning professor of the day, who received him with special courtesy and gave him unlimited privileges in the library (*Letters*, p. 279). This is not surprising considering Heyne's fondness for English literature. See Heeren's *Christian Gottlob Heyne*. It was, however, the famous physiologist and anthropologist Blumenbach who ultimately did for him the honors of the institution. He was an intimate in the latter's house and made the ascent of the Brocken in company with his son.

² See Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, Book IV, chap. II.

appointed there until after Coleridge's time,¹ but the close association of Heyne with men like Herder, Tieck, and Schlegel, and the existence in Göttingen of the Deutsche Gesellschaft, founded by Gesner for the improvement of the German language through translations from ancient and modern authors and for the study of the poetry, history, and antiquities of the fatherland, was sufficient to insure a pervasive interest in these matters in the academic community. It is important to note that neither the teachers nor the students at Göttingen were thoroughgoing specialists. The temper of the time encouraged men like Heyne and Blumenbach to range beyond their special fields.² This, with the absence of a chair of German literature, explains the somewhat surprising fact that Coleridge received his instruction in the Teutonic dialects from Thomas Tychsen, specialist in oriental literature and professor of theology from 1785 to 1834.³ With him Coleridge, reading privately, for he gave no lectures in this field, learned "as much of Gothic as sufficed to make me acquainted with its grammar and the radical words of most frequent occurrence," and read through, with occasional assistance, Otfried and "the most important remains of the Theotiscan or the transitional state of the Teutonic language from the Gothic to the Old German of the Swabian period." He made what must have been his first acquaintance with Continental mediaeval romance and "labored through" the master-singers, including Hans Sachs.⁴ The interest of Coleridge was at the same time literary and philological. He had come for a knowledge of German, and his conception of a mastery of the language involved a knowledge of its history, just as the ideal which he set for himself as an expounder of modern German literature involved familiarity with that literature from its primitive beginnings.⁵ The historical and philological purpose so clearly conceived shows Coleridge to have

¹ For information as to the curriculum, faculty, etc., at Göttingen see J. S. Pütter, *Versuch einer academischen Gelehrten-geschichte von der Georg-Augustus Universität zu Göttingen, 1765-1838*.

² Paulsen, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

³ E. H. Coleridge is in error in supposing the Tychsen from whom Coleridge received instruction to have been Oläus Tychsen, professor at Rostock in Mecklenburg-Schwerin (*Letters*, p. 298, note).

⁴ See the account of his studies in *Biographia literaria*, chap. x (Shawcross, ed., I, 138 ff.).

⁵ He felt also that his knowledge of the English language had benefited by his study of the Teutonic dialects. See *Letters*, pp. 267-68.

been in line with the scholarly movement which, in men like Ritson and Warton, marked the development of English romanticism. The uniqueness of Coleridge's position consisted in his having been the first Englishman to receive this historical training in German as distinct from English and general Teutonic literature, and in his having done so under the scholarly methods of a modern German university.

Nor did Coleridge undergo the discipline in any listless fashion. "For these four months I have worked harder than, I trust almighty God, I shall ever have occasion to work again," he writes to Wedgwood in May, 1799,¹ and in the *Biographia* he remarks: "I made the best use of my time and means; and there is no period of my life on which I can look back with such unmingled satisfaction." The half-year was indeed one of solid and significant accomplishment. Short as was the period of Coleridge's contact with the scholarship of modern Germany, it left an impress on his interests and ways of thought which is not to be neglected in the study of his literary life.

The fruits of Coleridge's academic training and of the private researches with which he supplemented it we may now examine. We must omit the long tale of his philosophical studies and fail to take account, for the most part, of his wide reading in English literature. Even aside from this his range is surprising enough. For the classics he maintained an enthusiasm throughout his life, and the evidence of his wide acquaintance with Greek authors is everywhere in his work. The interest in Greek is partly philological. He compiled for the use of his children a Greek grammar, called by his nephew "a truly marvellous monument of minute logical accuracy,"² he projected at one time a Greek lexicon,³ and he frequently undertook the arduous work of an emender of texts and improver of translations. The value of his labors in this field is not very considerable, but the simple fact of his patient concern with these minutiae is not without its significance. If not quite a Porson in classical philology, Coleridge has enough of the scholarly consciousness to value accuracy of text and rendering as an ideal.

¹ Cottle's *Reminiscences*, p. 427.

² See editor's note to *Table Talk (Works)*, VI, 284.

³ *Biographia literaria*, chap. xli, note (Shawcross, ed., I, 164).

Of greater intrinsic interest are the evidences of Coleridge's aliveness to the broader problems of classical scholarship. Many of his more modern views are undoubtedly the fruit of the German contact; they are, however, usually propounded and argued for in characteristic fashion, as if they were entirely original. Coleridge, as is well known and as he himself avowed, was always sublimely indifferent to distinctions of intellectual proprietorship. Thus he was a consistent advocate of the composite authorship of the *Iliad*,¹ having, according to his own statement, reasoned it out on the basis of hints afforded by Vico in his *Scienza nova*. The hint in Vico was broad enough, amounting to an exposition of the theory in its essential features, but that Coleridge should not have known Wolf's *Prolegomena*, which had appeared in 1795, or should have heard nothing of the controversy which was raging in the Göttingen circle in his day, exceeds belief.²

In the field of classical tragedy Coleridge was perhaps more capable than any other Englishman of his time, by his training and endowment, of interpreting the best that had been said and done abroad. It has not been sufficiently recognized that his scholarship here put him in relation with a very important side of contemporary German activity which remained untouched by Taylor, or DeQuincey, or Carlyle. The fundamental principles of ancient drama expounded in the lectures of 1818³ he derived from the *Vorlesungen* of Schlegel, who had been a pupil of Heyne's at Göttingen just before Coleridge's time, and whose work is in a broad sense the outcome of the humanistic movement to interpret ancient literature in the light of ancient life and thought. Especially important as opening up a vast field of modern research is Coleridge's endeavor to study Greek tragedy from the standpoint of the more primitive and ritualistic aspects of Greek religion. In his *Essay on the Fundamental Position of the Mysteries in Relation to Greek Tragedy*⁴ he makes the

¹ *Works*, IV, 301; cf. *Table Talk* (*Works*) VI, 312-13.

² Heyne had himself handled the subject tentatively in his *De antiqua Homeri lectione* before the Göttingen academy. See Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, III, 41. The controversy on the subject between Wolf and Heyne began in 1797.

³ *Works*, IV, 1 ff. See Anna A. Helmholtz, "The Indebtedness of Samuel Taylor Coleridge to August Wilhelm von Schlegel," *University of Wisconsin Bulletin* ("Phil. and Lit. Series"), III, No. 4 (1907), pp. 322-66.

⁴ Summary in *Works*, IV, 366 ff. Cf. the essay on the *Prometheus*, read before the Royal Society of Literature, May 18, 1825, *Works*, IV, 344 ff.

distinction between the autochthonous worship of the ancient inhabitants of the Peloponnesus and the Olympian system, in a manner which looks forward to the recent work of Professor Murray and Miss Harrison, and he sought to find in the "secret doctrines of the Eleusynian and Samothracian mysteries" the ultimate explanation of ancient drama. This is a line of thought which Coleridge could not have derived from English sources, and it is not, like the critical discussions in the public lectures, based on Schlegel. The true source of these speculations lies in the lucubrations of the theorizing mythologists, who, following Heyne, had dwelt on the distinction between the older and later myths and had emphasized the mysteries, the Bacchic worship, and the Egyptian and Phoenician influences on the more primitive and essential forms of Greek worship. Creuzer's famous *Symbolik und Mythologie* (1810 ff.) contains much that is parallel with Coleridge's thought, but it is Schelling's pamphlet *Ueber die Gottheiten von Samothrace* (1815) to which Coleridge is directly indebted. Belief in the philosophic wisdom of the ancient myths, which is shared by Creuzer and Schelling, underlies Coleridge's interpretation of the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus, and his discussion of the Asiatic and Greek mythologies¹ takes all its detail, without acknowledgment, from Schelling. What interested Coleridge chiefly in this new line of investigation was the possibility it seemed to open up of finding in the Greek system an echo of the revealed religion of the Hebrews, transmitted through Phoenicia and Egypt. This historic error haunted Coleridge's thought, it distorted his view of the significance of recent developments in Egyptian archaeology, and it rendered him incapable of making fruitful use of the new insight which his studies had given him into the essence of Greek worship, or of applying scientifically the analogies which he suggests with the religious observance of primitive peoples like the American Indians. Both Creuzer and Schelling had recognized the fact that their researches tended to confirm the older idea of the Hebraic origin of Greek mythology, but they had done so tentatively and with the warning that God had left no people without a witness of the truth. The religious and conservative-minded Coleridge followed the *ignis*

¹ *Works*, IV, 309 ff. A reference to Schelling and Creuzer is given by the American editor.

fatuus which they had shunned, and the light which was in him became darkness.

With regard to legitimate Hebrew scholarship the present writer is unable to judge either of the originality or of the authenticity of the doctrine which Coleridge was fond of dispensing from his seat in Highgate. Certain it is that he had a yearning, at least, toward thoroughgoing orientalism as the basis for a proper comprehension of the Bible and was not blind to the importance of the higher criticism of his time. "I wish I understood Arabic," he remarks, "but it is not worth while to undergo the labour necessary to get any oriental tongue but Hebrew."

Another persistent interest of Coleridge's, fostered by his German studies but already manifested in his early years, is philology in the narrower sense of linguistics. Coleridge was undoubtedly fond of language study, both as a means of wider literary acquisition and for its own sake. Of his facility in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and in the Germanic dialects I have already spoken. French he read with difficulty, preferring German translations of French works. His Italian he learned at Malta and during the seven months' sojourn in Italy. He could understand the spoken language well enough to converse with the elder Rossetti, the latter speaking Italian and Coleridge English. He read with facility and appears to have gone through the major Italian writers in the original;¹ but his pretensions, as usual, outran his accomplishment. His shortcomings are painfully apparent in his marginalia to Cary's *Dante*, where his attempts to correct the translation are in every case in vain. Coleridge's interest in the northern literatures had led him at least to dabble in Danish,² and his aspirations at one period extended to the Celtic

¹ See the notes on Petrarch in Coleridge's *Essays and Lectures* ("Everyman's Library"), pp. 226-31. He felt competent to lecture on Italian literature and suggested to Britton in 1819 that the audience should choose its own subjects! Among his projects was a translation of all of Boccaccio's works except the *Decameron* (Letter to Rogers, May, 1815, in P. W. Clayden's *Rogers and His Contemporaries*, I, 192). Fragmentary translations from Italian authors are scattered through his works: from Chiabrera in *The Friend*, essay 8; Machiavelli, *ibid.*, essay 16; Strozzi, *Biographia literaria*, chap. xvi, etc.

² See DeQuincey (ed. Masson), I, 314. Cf. Farley, *Scandinavian Influences in the English Romantic Movement*, p. 218. Coleridge promised translations from Swedish and Danish authors to his 1818 audience, but he deferred them to the end of the course, and there is no evidence that he ever read them. In 1800 he tells Thelwell that he amuses himself by studying the most ancient forms of the northern languages (Letter quoted by J. D. Campbell, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, p. 119). Farley finds no evidence that Coleridge could read Old Norse.

tongues and Basque! Of Coleridge's acquaintance with Spanish I know only that he projected a translation of Cervantes, which in his case is no evidence at all,¹ and that he makes some comments on the genius of the Spanish language.

The period of Coleridge's activities falls just too early for him to have come in contact with the modern development of scientific philology, but he did share the active interest in etymology and philosophical grammar which preceded in England and Germany the great discoveries of Schlegel, Bopp, and Grimm. His enthusiasm for such study was probably first aroused by Horne Tooke's influential *Diversions of Purley* (1786). He sent or was to have sent a copy of the book to Poole, with a special recommendation in 1798,² and though later he speaks abusively of the work, he borrows from it more than one idea or etymology. In Germany the new emphasis which was being placed on language as the expression of a people's spiritual life doubtless quickened Coleridge's zeal. His study of Gothic and Old High German under Tychsen would of necessity have been mainly philological in its emphasis. Blumenbach, moreover, with his theory of races, opened the way for much speculation on linguistic origins and relations; but on this point Coleridge can hardly be said to have kept abreast of the times. He appears from the remarks in *Table Talk*, February 24, 1827, to have been distantly acquainted with the new developments in the study of linguistic origins opened by the discovery of Sanskrit, but he is still groping after a single original speech, and he declares that the claims of Sanskrit for priority to the Hebrew are ridiculous.³

The evidence of Coleridge's passion for etymology, a passion, by the way, which was inherited by his son Derwent, is scattered everywhere in his writings. Like Carlyle, of whom in this, as in so many things, he was a predecessor, he frequently employs a derivation, usually false, to make a point. Like most English etymologists before him, he was seriously hampered by an ignorance of Anglo-Saxon. The most elementary knowledge would have prevented his

¹ Letter to Rogers, Clayden's *Rogers and His Contemporaries*, I, 192.

² See Poole's letter to Coleridge in Mrs. Sanford's *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, I, 280.

³ *Works*, VI, 279. Leibnitz had long since overthrown the belief that Hebrew was the original language. F. von Schlegel's *The Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, which laid down the lines of Indo-European philology, had appeared in 1808.

blunder in *The Watchman* (III, 76), where he says that Whitsuntide, Whittentide, was the time of choosing the wits or wise men to the Witenagemot. Again, in his remarks about the article in *Table Talk*,¹ he seems to be guessing about the simplest facts of the history of the language. The heaviest count against Coleridge in all this is his entire unconsciousness of his limitations. The following conversation is an amusing example of his dogmatic pretensions and of his astounding power of self-delusion:

Horne Tooke was once holding forth on language, when, turning to me, he asked me if I knew what the meaning of the final *-ive* was in English words. I said I thought I could tell what he, Horne Tooke himself, thought. "Why, what?" said he. "*Vis*," I replied; and he acknowledged that I had guessed right. I told him, however, that I could not agree with him, but believed that the final *-ive* came from *-ick*—*vicus*, *ᾱ kos*; the root denoting collectivity, and that it was opposed to the final *-ing*, which signifies separation, particularity, and individual property, from *ingle*, a hearth, or one man's place or seat; *ᾱ kos*, *vicus*, denoted an aggregation of *ingles*. The alteration of the *c* and *k* of the root into the *v* was evidently the work of the digamma power, and hence we find the *-icus* and *-ivus* indifferently as finals in Latin. . . . Horne Tooke upon this said nothing to my etymology; but I believe he found he could not make a fool of me, as he did of Godwin and some other of his butts.²

This may have passed very well with the Highgate audience, but if any one of them had taken the trouble to consult the *Diversions of Purley* (2d ed., p. 675) he might have turned the joke back on Coleridge with good effect, for Tooke himself there gives the very explanation which Coleridge claimed to have propounded, even to the suggestion of the digamma as an intermediary step, and it was undoubtedly from this source that Coleridge derived the wisdom with which he pictures himself to have confounded a rival philologist in this truly imaginary conversation.

As a contributor to the science of language Coleridge's observations are in the highest degree worthless. There is, however, one phase of his philological reflection which seems to me to be of considerable importance. Many of his remarks connect themselves with questions of literary effect and combine the critical with the purely linguistic point of view. As Coleridge is concerned with the

¹ *Works*, VI, 309.

² *Table Talk* (*Works*), VI, 477.

qualities of excellence and difference in prose and poetic style, so he is also with the relative effects of different languages or of the same language in different stages of its development. In insisting on the individuality of languages Coleridge allies himself with a phase of the critical movement to preserve the national traditions in literature. His predecessors were both German and English. Welsted, for example, had expatiated on the acquired and natural advantages of the English tongue, the latter being such "as the other modern languages do not possess or not with equal happiness, as the power of compounding words, the variety of verse, the rhyme natural," etc.¹

In like manner Coleridge uses his linguistic knowledge and his critical sense to define in detail, and often keenly, the individuality of languages. He speaks of the perfection of the Greek, comparing the Italian and Spanish, points out the value of the particles, comments on the expressiveness of the dual, and distinguishes the nature of Greek compounds, "the happy marriage of sweet sounds," which in our language are mere printers' compound epithets.² He notes how "in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective unconscious good sense, working progressively to desynonymize those words of originally the same meaning which the conflux of dialects has supplied to the more homogeneous languages, as the Greek and German, and which the same cause, joined with the accidents of translation from the original work of different countries, occasion in mixed languages like our own."³ Applied to particular literary types and to special authors, observations of this sort tend to slip over into the domain of literary criticism. Thus Coleridge maintains somewhat fancifully that English, by virtue of its composite character, is most appropriate to drama, "for it contains the harvest of the unconscious wisdom of various nations." He recognizes a definite relation between the genius of language and prose style, as in the lecture on Boccaccio,⁴ where he says that the long inwoven periods were natural in Greek but are foreign even in Latin

¹ "Dissertation Concerning the Perfection of the English Language," Welsted's *Works*, ed. Nichols, 1787.

² Notes on Chapman's *Homer*, *Essays and Lectures*, p. 356.

³ *Biographia literaria*, chap. iv (Shawcross ed.), I, 61. See also Coleridge's note. The remark quoted above is altogether the best philological observation which Coleridge anywhere makes.

⁴ *Miscellanies* (ed. Ashe), p. 100.

and particularly so in Teutonic. He finds the want of adverbs in the *Iliad* to be a trait of the "objective style." From this it is but a step to the kind of criticism which constitutes one of Coleridge's most significant contributions, the comparison and philosophic analysis of prose and poetic diction. He distinguishes a specifically dramatic diction in Shakespeare, Milton, and Massinger, as he had recognized a specifically dramatic language in the English. It is in the same spirit that he maintains the validity of a poetic style fundamentally different from that of prose, in opposition to Wordsworth's contention that they are the same.¹

If Coleridge's interest in the qualities and varieties of languages is closely associated with his criticism of literary styles and manners, his study of the older literatures of modern Europe is similarly connected both with his general critical activity and with his poetry. To what extent did Coleridge share in the mediaevalism of the English and German romantic schools in its more scholarly aspects? It must be admitted that mediaeval literature was with him no such exclusive and absorbing study as it was with Scott or Ritson. It is rather but one somewhat restricted phase of his eager literary curiosity. Coleridge's instinct, like Herder's, was to inquire broadly into the literary activity of the human spirit in all nations and periods. We have already noted the range of his German studies, directed toward a history of mediaeval German literature. In the course of his reading under Tychsen he appears to have acquired familiarity with the chief monuments of older German literature. He speaks appreciatively of Otfrid and translates a selection into attractive verse. Brandl thinks the passage to be closely related to the night scene in "Christabel"; it is certainly the source of the "Christmas Carol." Here then is a point of contact between Coleridge's mediaeval research and his creative work. His acquaintance with the Minnesänger leaves also an echo in the "Mutual Passion." The reading of Hans Sachs could scarcely afford an impetus to Coleridge's muse, but he speaks of "the rude strains of the cobbler of Nürenberg" as having given him at least a modest pleasure.² Coleridge's dramatic interests led him to pay special attention to the German

¹ *Biographia literaria*, chap. xviii (Shawcross ed.), II, 43 ff.

² For errors in Coleridge's remarks about Hans Sachs see note to *Biographia Literaria* (*Works*), III, 720.

mediaeval drama. He had transcribed at Helmstadt Hans Sachs's comedy, *Die ungleichen Kinder Evä*, and in his second lecture of 1818 he regaled his audience with an amusing analysis of the piece, his own fertile imagination supplying several picturesque touches not to be found in the original.¹ In his sketch of the evolution of mediaeval drama Coleridge follows Schlegel in the main,² but he had picked up in Italy some details relating to the extravagant presentations of the Christmas mysteries, and he is, so far as I know, original in finding in the Devil and the Vice genuine ancestors of Harlequin and the Clown.

Coleridge's relation to the more usual mediaeval interests of the English romanticists—namely, popular literature, the metrical romances, and the antiquities of popular custom and belief—demands a somewhat careful definition. Save for a brief discussion of the origin of the Maypole (*The Watchman*, Vol. III) and a few observations on folk customs which had interested him in Germany³ there is no evidence that he was touched in any way by mere antiquarian curiosity about the life of the past and its survivals. Hence there is in his poetry no imaginative reconstruction of the Middle Ages in their external aspects. On the other hand Coleridge's conception of literature as an evolution corresponding with the development of the human mind through its various stages led him to devote some attention in his lectures to the more primitive forms of expression represented in ballad and romance.⁴ Primarily, however, his interest in such materials was psychological, philosophical, and imaginative. They were to him the evidence of the instinct of the human mind toward belief in the supernatural, and as such they engaged his deepest attention. It was with this object that he aspired to write a treatise on "dreams, visions, ghosts, witchcraft," etc. For this sort of material Coleridge had a temperamental affinity quite different from Scott's merely curious interest, or from the artificial pretense of

¹ *Works*, IV, 238. Cain's bloody nose, the cuff bestowed by him on Adam, etc., are comic additions, conceived by Coleridge quite in the spirit of the original. His account of the last scene is almost entirely spurious. Either he wearied of the labor of transcription before he reached Act V, or he neglected to refer to his notes while preparing his discourse.

² *Progress of the Drama (Works)*, IV, 29 ff.

³ *New Monthly Magazine*, XLV, 218.

⁴ See the first, second, and third of the lectures of 1818; cf. his remarks on the analogy between the Homeric poems and the English romances.

belief. With Coleridge the willing suspension of reason was something more than a literary and poetic phenomenon. Superstition, derived from popular sources, blending with his own consciousness of supersensuous reality, determines the essential imaginative content of his poetry. Thus in "The Three Graves," "The Ancient Mariner," and "Christabel," three familiar folk motives—the curse, the taboo, and the serpent woman—are assimilated with a completeness possible only to a poet to whom these beliefs not only afford an insight into human psychology but are the symbolic expressions of man's authentic relation to the unseen world. It is through this fundamental kinship of temperament and belief that Coleridge is enabled to penetrate to the spiritual essence of mediaeval life, while remaining indifferent to its outward forms. From the purely literary standpoint also Coleridge, like Wordsworth, was attracted toward the popular lyric, ballad, and romance, as is evident from his translation of "Wenn Ich ein Vöglein wär" from the *Wunderhorn*¹, by his imitation of ballad style in "The Ancient Mariner," "The Dark Ladie,"² etc., and by his revival of the romance form in "Christabel."

Toward the Scandinavian studies, which had by Coleridge's time become popular in England, he and his group had always shown a friendly interest, but the ground remained practically untrodden by his feet. Coleridge sent to Wordsworth a copy of Cottle's *Translations from Icelandic Poetry* (1797). He had read David Cranz's *History of Greenland* and the *Eddas*, and, as we have seen, had at least dabbled in the Danish and Swedish tongues, but neither in his poetry nor in his criticism does he show any evidence of having come fairly in contact with the northern source of romantic inspiration.

Of the various fields of modern literature in English with which Coleridge occupied himself, the Elizabethan drama is the only one in which his work is of a character to require close examination in this paper. We may select his rather extensive Shakespearean studies as a final example of the methods and results of his scholarship. Coleridge shared with Lamb a new enthusiasm for even the minor playwrights of the Elizabethan age, especially for Massinger, but he

¹ "Something Childish but Very Natural," *Poems*, p. 146.

² For an analysis of Coleridge's relation to the ballad see C. W. Stork, "The Influence of the Popular Ballad on Wordsworth and Coleridge," *PMLA*, XXIX, 299 ff.

regarded them less for their own sakes than as a means of obtaining a just estimate of the great luminary for whom he entertained an admiration amounting almost to superstitious awe. While Lamb is eclectic and antiquarian in his criticism, Coleridge, here as elsewhere, is at least in aim and general trend scientific and historical, as well as aesthetic. To the study of Shakespeare he devoted himself persistently throughout his life. At Cambridge he wrote essays to vindicate Shakespeare's art, and in the conversations of his last years he was still dispensing appreciative comments, elucidating obscure passages, pronouncing on questions of authorship, philosophizing about the characters, and emending the text. If Coleridge's Shakespeare criticism is honeycombed with error and distorted by wildness of judgment, it is not for want of a proper devotion to the object, nor is it for want of a critical ideal. Throughout his discussion of the dramas Coleridge shows a sincere desire to get at the meaning, to distinguish the genuine from the spurious, and to see the works in their proper literary and historical relations.

In this aim he is often too much dominated by the desire to find Shakespeare free from all imperfection. He strongly inclines to deny the poet's responsibility for whatever his own literary sense is unable to approve. Thus he repeatedly affirms that the Porter scene in *Macbeth* is an interpolation, but, finding in it one phrase—"the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire"—which is worthy of the master's pen, he is driven to the theory that Shakespeare accepted a "disgusting" interpolation of the actors and added to it this touch of genius.¹ In another passage (*Julius Caesar*, III, i), he refuses to recognize an obvious pun because, in his opinion, it mars a fine passage, though he knows perfectly well that it is in entire accord with Elizabethan practice. The conflict between the historical and the appreciative attitude in Coleridge is well illustrated in his opinions regarding the stage presentation of the dramas. His instinct inclined him to agree with Lamb that Shakespeare ought only to be read, yet he was fully conscious of the intimate relation of the plays to the stage and of the critical necessity of viewing them in the light of stage

¹ Coleridge's commentary on Shakespeare is for the most part contained in the notes on the various plays, *Works*, IV, 73 ff. Since the passages referred to are easily located, specific references will not ordinarily be given except to the acts and scenes of the plays.

conditions. "The condition of the stage and the character of the times in which a great poet flourished must be taken into account in considering the question as to his judgment."

Setting aside the purely literary and philosophical aspects of Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism, we find him chiefly concerned with questions of authorship, with the problem of chronology, and with the text. At three periods of his life he attempted a classification of the plays on a chronological basis. A comparison of these classifications is, as Furness remarks,¹ a study rather of Coleridge's mind than of Shakespeare's. Baffled by the scantiness of the external evidence collected by Malone, Coleridge makes the initial blunder of rejecting such evidence as there was. "If he were to adopt any theory," he told Collier, "it would be rather psychological and pathological than chronological." Yet in 1802 he had set down a chronological arrangement based on "the internal evidence of the writings themselves." In the first epoch he places what he calls *Uebergangswerke*—*Henry VI*, the old *King John*, *Pericles*, and other doubtful plays; in the second *All's Well* and *Romeo and Juliet* in their first versions, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; in the third and fourth the comedies and later histories; in the fifth ("The period of beauty was now passed; and that of grandeur succeeds") the tragedies, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and lastly *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Cymbeline*. It would have been well if Coleridge had rested with this arrangement, which, except in the first group, where the fallibility even of his purely literary sense is well illustrated, is far from bad—is indeed more nearly in accord with modern opinion than Malone's latest chronology. The later attempts, except that he makes *Love's Labour's Lost* the earliest of the plays, are much inferior. *The Tempest*, for example, in 1810, gets into the second period and *Cymbeline* comes before the tragedies. The historical plays are here put last, "in order to be able to show my reasons for rejecting some whole plays and very many scenes in others." The weaknesses of the subjective method reflect themselves in the utter instability of his ideas. In his two subsequent discussions of the subject (1811 and 1819)² the system is modified at random.

¹ *Variorum, Cymbeline*, 445.

² *Miscellanies* (edited by Ashe), p. 59.

On one point Coleridge's literary insight enabled him to make a genuinely significant contribution. In all the chronologies he treats *All's Well That Ends Well* as an early play, assuming the existence of an earlier version, afterward worked up afresh. The idea that the play was originally a counterpart of *Love's Labour's Lost* was not a novel one, but Coleridge was the first to point out, as he did to Collier in 1811 and again in 1818, the two divergent styles in the present play.¹

Coleridge's observations regarding authorship are not worth notice, except that they show his preoccupation with this problem and again reveal his tendency to base his judgment on subjective impressions. As a result his opinions are often unstable and self-contradictory, as if he had difficulty in remembering at one time the profound convictions of another. According to Crabb Robinson, Coleridge and Lamb erred together in the opinion that not a line of *Titus Andronicus* was Shakespeare's; but Coleridge later observed, with truer instinct, that Shakespeare was responsible for some passages. Again, while at one time he affirmed that Shakespeare wrote nothing of *Richard III* except the character of Richard—"certainly not the Lady Anne scene"²—he brings forward in a lecture the mediaeval tale of *Ywain* as the source from which "Shakespeare derived the strongly marked and extraordinary scene between Richard III and Lady Anne."

Of more importance than his attempts to fix Shakespearean chronology or to settle perplexing questions of authorship are Coleridge's labors as a commentator and textual critic. His rather wide familiarity with Elizabethan literature, his keen though not infallible instinct for the Shakespearean manner and point of view, and his power of suggestive and illuminating interpretation enabled him to make some permanent contribution to the body of Shakespearean commentary, a contribution which justifies the frequent appearance of his name in the notes of the modern Variorum edition. But here, as elsewhere, one must note the inevitable limitations. In the first

¹ Tolman, in his essay on *Love's Labour's Lost*, is in error in saying that the view that the play is a second version is not found in Coleridge. See Collier's edition of Shakespeare (1858, II, 529), and Coleridge's observation in the chronology of 1802—"afterwards worked up afresh, umgearbeitet, especially Parolles."

² Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, I, 309-10. Cf. *Works*, IV, 238.

place, Coleridge is deficient in his attention to the labors of his predecessors. He uses, as a rule, only the editions of Theobald and Warburton, though he shows familiarity also with Rowe, Farmer, Malone, and others. His shortcomings in this respect are illustrated by his frequent failure to observe that his comments have been anticipated, and by his adopting an error in interpretation which a knowledge of the better editions would have enabled him to correct.¹

Coleridge's indifference to the editors is partly motivated by his scorn of them, and some of his keenest observations are devoted to the ridicule of their ineptitudes. His is the sentiment of the man of genius, who resents the dull attempt of the scholar to elucidate his literary idol by mere learning. "Oh! Theobald," he ejaculates on one occasion, "what a commentator thou wast when thou would'st profess to understand Shakespeare instead of collating the text."

In his strictures on his predecessors Coleridge is generally quite right. Again and again he assails their errors with a keen precision which leaves no room for further argument, and these remarks constitute the sanest and most illuminating part of his commentary.² But his own missteps in the treacherous ways of Shakespearean exegesis are of a character almost to have entitled him to join the sorry group of commentators who invoke the outraged spirit of the bard in Coleridge's projected satire.³ In the matter of emendation the ridicule which he lavishes upon Theobald or Warburton or Malone comes back upon himself. Except when confronted with the meddlings of others he is anything but scientifically conservative about the text; and he is guilty of some suggestions which are unrivaled even in the eighteenth century for wild absurdity. Such

¹ See, for example, his fruitless speculation on the meaning of "loach" (*I Henry IV*, II, i, 23), which, though boggled by Warburton, had been correctly given by Johnson, Steevens, and Malone.

² See, for example, his attack on Theobald's defense of the supposed contradiction in Hamlet's "Undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns" after he has recently interviewed a ghost. Theobald's heresy is not yet dead, but C. is in accord with the best modern opinion.

The conjecture "spare me" for "Phillip? Sparrow!" in *King John* (I, i, 232) is justly made game of by Coleridge, who correctly explains the remark as an allusion to Skelton's poem. For other instances of corrective criticism see notes on *Macbeth*, I, iii, 37; *Winter's Tale*, III, ii, 187; *Othello*, I, ii, 21; *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, i, 14; *Hamlet*, IV, vii, 118; *Julius Caesar*, I, ii, 86; *Twelfth Night*, I, i, 14.

On the other hand Coleridge can do justice to a good comment, even in Warburton or Theobald, when he sees it. Cf. note to *Timon*, I, ii, 117.

³ *Anima Poetae*, p. 88.

are his substitution of "monarch sire" for "mounting sire" (*Henry V*, II, iv, 57), and his classic transformation of Macbeth's "blanket of the dark" into the grotesque "blank height of the dark."¹ These absurdities, carelessly thrown off in conversation, are not seriously to be held against Coleridge; but when he would change "die" to the commonplace "live" in Henry V's

We would not die in that man's company
Who fears his fellowship to die with us,

we feel that he has shown a bluntness of literary perception not very different from the worst he abuses in Warburton. In his comment on *Merry Wives*, I, iii, 61, he wilfully overlooks an obvious meaning and emends in a fashion truly ingenious in error.²

Such wild guesses at truth are, after all, not very common in Coleridge. His very natural inclination was to settle nice questions in interpretation by his literary judgment, and while this is sometimes perverse, more often it guides him truly, making his comments suggestive even when they are not wholly acceptable.

Of that part of his comment which illustrates the philological and scientific trend in his intellectual constitution there are examples in his notes on the learned commentators. Alien as antiquarianism was to his interests, he is ready enough to bring mere learning to bear on Shakespeare whenever he conceives it to be illuminating. Occasionally his erudition is of the flighty sort displayed in the perversities of the *Table Talk*. Opinion may differ as to the soundness of his startling transformation of Doll Tearsheet into Doll Tear-street (street-walker, from *terere stratam*, thereby explaining the prince's remark, "This Doll Tearsheet should be some road."),³ but when he tries to connect "enkindle" in Banquo's "That trusted home might yet enkindle you unto the throne" with "kind, kin, as where rabbits are said to kindle," we see the madman and the poet playing at ducks and drakes with the scholar, the result being a species of Shakespearean erudition which is, in truth, such stuff as philological dreams

¹ *Table Talk* (*Works*), VI, 312 and 508-9.

² "As many devils entertain; and 'To her, Boy, say I.'" Coleridge would read "As many devils entered swine!"

³ II *Henry IV*, II, ii, 183. W. S. Walker believed that Coleridge's emendation should have been adopted long ago (*A Critical Examination of the Text of Shakespeare*, III, 135).

are made of. Yet Coleridge's linguistic curiosity, when sensibly directed to the observation of Elizabethan usage, undoubtedly helped him to interpret the text of the plays aright.¹

In general then Coleridge's commentary, though wild enough at times, is not altogether a failure, even from the scholarly point of view. At its worst it shows him ready to make a close and critical study of the text the basis of the soaring structure of his appreciative and philosophical interpretation. If he is warped in his view of the facts by his tendency to rely on subjective impression and vain hypothesis, he is nevertheless here as elsewhere a seeker after truth, and it is due to the complexity of his consciousness that he was incapable of becoming a Theobald or a Malone.

The combination of traits revealed in these Shakespeare notes is, as we have seen, characteristic of the entire range of Coleridge's literary studies. We are confronted everywhere with evidence of the psychological weaknesses which impaired the validity of his search after basic fact—his constitutional inaccuracy, his proneness to sacrifice the fruits of observation and scientific reason to what he believed to be religious and philosophical truth, the treacherous strength of the imagination, which made him unable to distinguish the thoughts of others from his own and, in general, to see reality uncolored by the rainbow hues of his own consciousness. Robertson's scathing analysis of Coleridge's mental constitution² is hardly too severe; but Coleridge's "intellectual dishonesty" is seldom or never deliberate. It is closely associated, moreover, with the faculty which made him succeed as a poet where he failed as a scholar, as Robertson himself recognizes, when he says of "The Ancient Mariner," "The quality which in Coleridge had to serve for strength of character, namely, intellectual zeal, here attains to a sincerity which is perhaps

¹ The following interesting comment shows him hesitating, in his really earnest desire to find Shakespeare's true text and meaning, between the solid claims of his knowledge of the language and the more treacherous allurements of his sense of style:

O, these encounterers, so glib of tongue,
That give a coasting welcome ere it come.
[*T. and C.*, IV, v, 19.]

Coleridge thinks that it should perhaps be "accosting" ("Accost her, Knight, accost"). Yet the other is "so Shakespearean," taking coasting as epithet and adjective of welcome. But then he cannot readily understand the meaning unless "ere it come" is changed to "ere they land." And so, regretfully, he reads "accosting welcome" and explains "that give welcome to a salute ere it comes." The emendation is adopted in all modern editions.

² *New Essays toward a Critical Method.*

only possible in virtue of a weak relation to actuality." The intellectual zeal, had it been uncrossed by the wilder metaphysical and imaginative strain and unimpaired by the ravages of opium, might have made of Coleridge a literary scholar of wider range and more penetrating insight than any of his contemporaries; but, unlike Goethe, he was incapable of combining a steady hold on outward truth with the ideality, the spiritual vision, the subjective consciousness of the poet. He is a true child of the romantic age in both his weakness and his strength.

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THE SOURCES OF WIELAND'S *DON SYLVIO*

Wieland once remarked, in conversation with Böttiger, that he had never written anything for which he had not found the material in some old romance, legend, or fabliau.¹ In the case of *Don Sylvio* borrowings from Cervantes were noted by contemporary reviewers,² and the author himself frankly admitted a certain resemblance to *Don Quixote*.³ In our day the borrowings from Cervantes have been traced in detail by Stephan Tropsch⁴ and Tjard W. Berger;⁵ Augustus Wood⁶ attributes Pedrillo's ludicrous slips of the tongue to the influence of Partridge in *Tom Jones* and of Slipslop in *Joseph Andrews*, whereas Karl Walter⁷ shows the affinity in this respect between Pedrillo and Launcelot Gobbo in the *Merchant of Venice*. Tropsch⁸ has also pointed out reminiscences from Lucian, while K. O. Mayer⁹ has traced back many of Wieland's motives to the French fairy tales of his time.

It would seem, therefore, that the field had been pretty thoroughly covered. There exists, however, another work, now almost forgotten, which in its scope and tendency is very similar to *Don Sylvio*—so nearly identical, in fact, that its plan, together with that of *Don*

¹ *Literarische Zustände und Zeitgenossen. In Schilderungen aus Karl Aug. Böttiger's handschriftlichem Nachlasse*, I, 182. Herausgegeben von K. W. Böttiger, Leipzig, 1838. This conversation is dated February 28, 1796.

² Compare, for example, the review by Musaeus in the *Allgem. deutsche Bibliothek*, I, 2 (1765), p. 97: "Es herrscht hier freylich keine Originalmanier; die Stellung ist vom Cervantes und die Farbenmischung vom Fielding: allein der hauptphilosophische Gedanke, der dabey zum Grunde liegt, mag dem Verfasser eigen seyn, und kann ihm Ehre machen."

³ *Der teutsche Merkur*, V (1774), 344, in a review of Tobias Knaut: "Gesezt aber auch, Tobias Knaut wäre ungefähr so eine Nachahmung des Tristrams, wie der weibliche Don Quichotte, oder wie Don Sylvio Nachahmungen des Spanischen Don Quichotte sind."

⁴ "Wielands *Don Sylvio* und Cervantes' *Don Quijote*," *Euphorion*, 4, Ergänzungsheft (1899), pp. 32-61.

⁵ "*Don Quixote*" in *Deutschland und sein Einfluss auf den deutschen Roman (1618-1800)*. Heidelberg Diss., 1908.

⁶ *Einfluss Fieldings auf die deutsche Literatur*. Heidelberg Diss., Yokohama, 1895.

⁷ *Chronologie der Werke C. M. Wielands (1760-1760)*. Greifswald Diss., 1904.

⁸ *Ztsch. f. vergl. Literaturgeschichte*, N.F., XII (1898), 454-56.

⁹ *Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturgeschichte*, V (1892), 392-408.

Quizote, gives an adequate foundation for the entire structure of Wieland's romance. The book in question bears the title:

Voyage Merveilleux du Prince Fan-Férédin dans la Romancie; Contenant Plusieurs Observations Historiques, Géographiques, Physiques, Critiques & Morales. A Paris, Chez P. G. Le Mercier, rue S. Jaques, au Livre d'Or. M.DCC.XXXV. Avec Approbation & Privilège du Roy.

In addition to the title-page, printed in red and black, there are vi pages+2 leaves+275 pages of text in small octavo. According to Barbier¹ a second edition appeared in the same year at Amsterdam, and a third in 1738 at Paris. Wieland therefore had abundant opportunity to become acquainted with the work, which was later reprinted in Volume XXIX of the *Voyages imaginaires*,² where, however, the Dedication, most important for our purposes, is lacking. The work is discussed by O. De Gourcuff in "Deux voyages imaginaires écrits par des Bretons," *Revue de Bretagne* (1891), which I have not seen.

The anonymous author of the *Voyage merveilleux* was Guillaume Hyacinthe Bougeant, a Jesuit, who was born at Quimper in 1690 and died at Paris in 1743.³ In addition to historical and theological works he wrote: *Anacréon et Sapho, dialogues en vers grecs* (1712); *Le Saint déniché, ou la Banqueroute des marchands de miracles, comédie en cinq actes* (1732); *Amusements philosophiques sur le langage des bêtes* (1739).

The *Voyage merveilleux*, doubtless on account of the footnote on page 3, is usually described as a "critique ingénieuse du livre de *L'Usage des Romans*, par Lenglet-Dufresnoy." It contains, however, numerous similar thrusts at other novelistic and romantic literature in vogue at the time, such as *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Le Roman de l'Astrée*, *Cleveland*, *Les Aventures d'un homme de qualité*, *La Princesse de Cleves*, and *Manon Lescaut*, to say nothing of the *Contes des Fées*, *Contes Chinois*, *Contes Peruviens*, and the current mediaeval romances of

¹ *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes*, 3. éd., 1879.

² *Voyages imaginaires, songes, visions, et romans merveilleux*, recueillis par Garnier. Paris, 1787-95, 39 vols. There are copies in the libraries of Congress, of the Johns Hopkins University, and of the Peabody Institute.

³ Cf. J.-M. Quérard, *La France littéraire, ou Dictionnaire bibliographique*, Paris, 1827. The title is incorrectly given (I, 447) as *Voyage . . . dans la Romanie*, and this misprint is perpetuated in Lanson's *Manuel bibliographique*.

knightly adventure. A discussion of these matters, however, is not essential here. The author's aim is clearly set forth in his Dedication, addressed to Madame C— B—:

Non, Madame, je ne connois point de méchanceté pareille à celle que vous m'avez faite. Il faut que le Public en soit juge; je ne puis souffrir les Romans, vous le sçavez. Je vois que vous les aimez, & je vous en fais la guerre. Vous me demandez pourquoi: je vous dis mes raisons; & comme si vous étiez disposée à vous laisser persuader, finement vous m'engagez à les mettre par écrit. Mais quoi! faire une dissertation raisonnée, une controverse de Casuiste ou de Philosophe pédant? Non, dis-je en homme d'esprit; il faut donner à mes raisons un tour agréable, les envelopper sous quelque idée riante, sous quelque fiction qui amuse; & pour cela j'imagine le Voyage Merveilleux du Prince Fan-Férédin. Le voilà fait: c'est un Roman; & c'est moi qui l'ai fait. O Ciel! c'est-à-dire, que vous avez trouvé le moyen de me faire faire un Roman, à moi l'ennemi déclaré des Romans, & cela dans le tems que je vous reproche de les aimer. Avouëz-le, Madame: c'est-là ce qu'on appelle une trahison, une noirceur. Mais je serai vengé. Vous n'aimez pas les louanges; privilege bien singulier pour une femme. Vous abhorrez une Epître Dédicatoire, vous me l'avez dit.¹ . . . Gardez-moi donc le secret, je vous prie, comme je vous le garderai; & je vous promets de plus que si ce petit Ouvrage répond à mes intentions, en vous inspirant à vous & à ceux qui le liront, un juste dégoût de la lecture des Romans, je vous pardonnerai de me l'avoir fait écrire. J'ai l'honneur d'être, Madame, Votre très-humble & très-obéissant serviteur * * *

We have here, clearly expressed and motivated, the satire upon the popularity of fairy-tale literature with which Wieland is sometimes credited, and Gervinus' criticism of *Don Sylvio* thus loses its point as far as Wieland is concerned.²

Er setzt also als Vertreter der schwärmerischen Verirrungen den Geschmack der Feenmärchen, der damals in Frankreich herrschte. Aber in Deutschland waren diese Dinge kaum durch die nürnbergger Uebersetzung des Kabinets der Feen bekannt, und der Hieb fiel also ganz flach.

An analysis of the story proper will enable us to compare its plan with that of *Don Sylvio*.

The education of Prince Fan-Férédin was directed by his mother, Queen Fan-Férédine. The latter cared little enough for romances, but, having read by chance the assertion that nothing was more

¹ In the omitted portion the author threatens to reveal the lady's identity but finally desists on reflecting that she could revenge herself by publishing his name.

² *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, IV (5. Aufl., 1873), 308.

suited to form the heart and mind of youth, she felt in conscience bound to make the young prince read as much as possible of *romans*, so as to inspire him betimes with the love of virtue and honor, a horror of vice, the avoidance of the passions, and a taste for things true and great. He soon perceived the fruits of such a laudable education:

Agité de mille mouvemens inconnus, le cœur plein de beaux sentimens, & l'esprit rempli de grandes idées, je commençai à me dégoûter de tout ce qui m'environnoit. Quelle différence, disois-je, de ce que je vois & de tout ce que j'entends, avec ce que je lis dans les *Romans*! Je vois ici tout le monde s'occuper d'objets d'intérêt, de fortune, d'établissement, ou de plaisirs frivoles. Nulle aventure singulière: nulle entreprise héroïque [pp. 3-4].

The hero accordingly determines to abandon his land, to seek the marvelous land of Romance. Having secretly provided himself with everything necessary for the expedition, he begins his quest on a beautiful moonlit night. Mountains and plains, cities and castles without number are met with, but they are in no wise different from those at home, so that he finally begins to weary of his search. In vain he makes inquiries; some have never heard of the land of Romance, others are familiar with the name but not with its location. The only thing which sustains the hero's courage is the reflection that this land must be somewhere, that it cannot possibly be a chimera:

Car enfin, disois-je, si ce pays n'existoit pas réellement, il faudroit donc traiter de visions ridicules & de fables puériles tout ce qu'on lit dans les *Romans*. Quelle apparence! Eh! que faudroit-il donc penser de tant de personnes si raisonnables d'ailleurs qui ont tant de goût pour ces lectures, & de tant de gens d'esprit qui emploient leurs talens à composer de pareils Ouvrages? [pp. 6-7].

He therefore persists, until finally, by mere accident, he stumbles upon the object of his search. Leading his horse up the high mountains of Troximanie, he eventually reaches the top, when suddenly the ground gives way beneath him, so that he rolls down in one direction, his horse in the other. Fan-Férédin finds himself at the bottom of a frightful precipice surrounded by fearful mountains, and it is evident that he owes his life to the "protection particulière de quelque Fée, de quelque Génie favorable, ou de quelqu'une de ces petites Divinités qui voltigent dans le pays des *Romans* en plus

grand nombre que les papillons ne volent au Printems dans nos campagnes" (p. 9).

With much hardship he makes his way to a more open place, a sort of cemetery with the remains of various creatures that frequent the land of Romance—griffins, centaurs, hippogriffs, dragons, harpies, and the like—and in the midst of these observations a centaur comes out of a cave with the carcass of a hippogriff. Although the hero is not without natural courage, and despite the fact that he, from his reading, is perfectly familiar with centaurs, this sight at first causes him some emotion, so that he hides behind a rock until the centaur has retired. Upon reflection, however, he enters the cave, vainly calling on the centaur for aid. With great difficulty he explores the cave and finally emerges into the land of Romance.

It is impossible here to enter into any details of description—there are pegasuses, unicorns, griffins, hippogriffs, centaurs, hircocerfs, chimeras, salamanders, and sirens. Boats appear as soon as one desires to cross a river or a lake, and bridges are built in an instant. There are brooks of milk and honey which are accounted for most naturally: cows and goats have such an abundance of milk, which they give spontaneously, that a brooklet of milk is formed as soon as a dozen of them are assembled; similarly, the bees alight on a tree and make honey in such prodigious quantities that the continually falling drops make a rivulet.¹

At a certain place Fan-Férédin touches with his hand certain rocks that had attracted his attention, only to find them soft and yielding to the touch. He later learns that an unhappy but eloquent lover had recounted his torments to these rocks, which had been unable to resist his touching appeal; some had split from top to bottom, others had melted like wax, and the hardest had been softened, as described above.²

In the course of his peregrinations the hero is directed to the Forest of Adventures, where, with herbs plucked at random, he frees

¹ Compare in this connection the complete title of the first edition of Wieland's novel: *Der Sieg der Natur über die Schwärmerey, oder die Abentheuer des Don Sylvio von Rosalba, Eine Geschichte, worin alles Wunderbare natürlich zugeht.*

² Compare with this the following passage from *Don Sylvio*, II, 288 (ed. of 1772): "nachdem er sich auf einem Felsen, der zwar wie andere Felsen von Stein, aber so weich wie ein Polster war, zurecht gesetzt hatte. . . ."

a cavalier from an enchanted sleep caused by a sorcerer in the service of a rival. The cavalier had been sleeping for a year, "sans pouvoir être réveillé que par le Prince Fan-Férédin, à qui il étoit réservé de me désenchanter." Immediately calling Fan-Férédin by name, he introduces himself as "Prince Zazaraph, Grand Paladin de la Dondindandie." He had spent several years in the land of Romance, which one enters by the gate of love and leaves by that of marriage. Zazaraph loves the beautiful Princess Anemone, with whom he expects to return to his native land within three days.

In the meantime he offers to serve as the guide of Fan-Férédin, "& trois jours vous suffiront pour connoître toute la Romancie, sans vous donner même la peine de la parcourir tout entière, parce qu'on ne voit presque partout que la même chose." There is also a disquisition on the language of the country, which is, in effect, a satire on the *préciosité* of the time. In the discussion of the geography of the country Fan-Férédin learns that there is "une haute & basse Romancie. Nous sommes ici, me dit-il, dans la haute Romancie, & elle est aisée à distinguer de la basse par toutes les merveilles dont elle est remplie." In former times the boundaries of the land of Romance were strictly guarded, the inhabitants being limited to the most celebrated heroes: Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, Perceforêt, Amadis, Roland, Merlusine, and others. Later on Pharamond, Cleopatra, Cyrus, and the like were admitted, and thereafter the heroes and princes of Faery, of the *Thousand and One Nights*, the *Contes Chinois*. Finally when travelers and adventurers, men and women of mediocre qualities, came in it became necessary to make the division into Upper and Lower Romance.

In the course of this narrative Fan-Férédin is compelled to gap, and finds that this is "la maladie du pays . . . à peu près comme le mal de mer pour ceux qui font un premier voyage sur cet élément." For a change of air they mount a pair of great grasshoppers, which are more gentle but less speedy than the hippogriffs. The methods of travel are thereupon described, particularly the "Lettres Romanciennes," by virtue of which the traveler has no trouble about bad weather, broken carriages, and wretched inns, but lodges in the castles of princes and seigneurs, where all the ladies fall in love with him.

When Zazaraph, in the course of this recital, exhibits the portrait of his adored Anemone, Fan-Férédin recognizes in her his own sister, the Infanta Fan-Férédine. At the same time the Grand Paladin, on looking at his new friend more closely, detects certain striking resemblances between him and the brother of his beloved, so that the dénouement of the story is clearly foreshadowed. The conversation is interrupted, however, and the following chapter describes the "Ouvriers, Métiers & Manufactures de la Romancie." Meanwhile the princes approach the harbor, where various vessels are arriving, one of which brings the Princess Anemone. She had been carried off by the perfidious Prince Gulifax, and upon ultimate delivrance from him she had fallen into other perilous situations, out of all of which she eventually made her escape.

Her narrative is longer than that of Zazaraph; during its recital Fan-Férédin falls desperately in love with her friend Rosebelle, sister of the Grand Paladin. He is accepted, and the thirty-six formalities required in the land of Romance are to a large extent waived, so that the two pairs are on the point of departing for la Dondindandie to solemnize their union, this being impossible in la Romancie.

Meanwhile there is a tournament, at which Fan-Férédin carries off the prize, which he is to present to the lady of his heart. Unfortunately the ladies are all masked on this occasion, so that the hero makes the biggest blunder imaginable, presenting the jeweled bracelet to the Princess Rigriche, who is naturally very proud of the honor. Upon unmasking, she exhibits a face so ugly that Fan-Férédin takes it to be a second mask, likewise to be removed, while Rosebelle promptly faints away at the sight of this apparent perfidy of her lover. When the latter reflects upon the opinion which Rosebelle must have of him, he likewise swoons. He recovers his senses in the arms of Rigriche, who regards him as her lawful prize and refuses to yield her claim. She is described as "une grosse petite personne," and Fan-Férédin is "sans doute le premier amant qui eût rendu hommage à ses attrait, & peut-être n'espéroit-elle pas en trouver un second." When she finds herself scorned, "elle fit bien-tôt succéder aux douceurs des injures si atroces, que je n'eus d'autre parti à prendre que de lui céder la place" (p. 267).

Meanwhile Zazaraph is ready to avenge with blood the insult put upon his sister, but the matter is deferred, and ultimately explanations are made and accepted. The morrow therefore finds the company on the way to la Dondindandie. In their costly train there is nothing meaner than bridles of gold and saddles ornamented with pearls and diamonds, and their servants exhibit the richest livery. As they approach the goal a sudden, fatal moment robs the hero of his perfect happiness: "mais pour bien entendre ce cruel événement, il faut reprendre la chose de plus haut, & prévenir les Lecteurs que je vais changer de ton" (p. 271). In short, the entire story is confessed to be a mere dream. In his true character the hero is M. de la Brosse, of Lower Languedoc, whose sister has just married M. des Mottes, and, in order to make a double alliance, M. de la Brosse has become engaged to the sister of M. des Mottes. Meanwhile—

M. de la Brosse ayant la tête remplie d'une longue suite de Romans qu'il avoit lûs récemment, rêva dans un long & profond sommeil toute l'Histoire qu'on vient de lire. Après s'être métamorphosé en Prince Fan-Férédin, il fit de M. des Mottes un Grand Paladin Zazaraph. Il changea sa sœur en Princesse Anemone, sa maîtresse en Princesse Rosebelle, & composa tout le beau tissu d'aventures qu'il vient de raconter. Or ce Gentilhomme, ci-devant Prince Fan-Férédin; c'est moi-même ne vous en déplaît, & jugez par conséquent quel fut mon étonnement à mon réveil de me retrouver M. de la Brosse [pp. 272-73].

Let us now compare briefly the essential points of Wieland's story. Don Sylvio de Rosalva¹ grows up under the tutelage of an elderly maiden aunt, apparently his only relative, as a young sister had mysteriously disappeared some years before the opening of the story.

As soon as Don Sylvio had learned enough Latin from the Vicar of the village, to comprehend Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, . . . Donna Menzia determined to take upon herself the care of forming the young man; and of giving him every perfection, which in her ideas, could make him an accomplished Cavalier. It was rather unfortunate, that Donna Menzia had picked up all those ideas respecting education, in *Pharamond*, *Clelia*, *Grand Cyrus*, and

¹ "My colleague Dr. Erasmo Buceta suggests that the name is probably to be traced back to Book XII of *Amadis of Gaul*: *Don Silves de la Selva*. The similarity is striking, and Wieland's familiarity with the *Amadis* needs no detailed proof. Book XII appeared in numerous Spanish and French editions, from which latter Wieland presumably drew, as the German editions usually change the name to *Ritter* [Fürst, Prinz] *Silves vom Walde*. In the preface to his *Neuer Amadis* (1771) Wieland uses the form *Silvio de la Silva*."

other books of that stamp, which, with the *Adventures of the twelve Peers of France*, and the *Knights of the Round Table*, constituted the chief part of her library. In these volumes, she conceived, were to be found all the treasures of the most sublime and useful knowledge; and therefore thought she could no way better instruct her young pupil, than by endeavoring to inspire him with those ideas, and with that taste, which she herself had deduced from sources so pure. The happy disposition of young Don Sylvio in this respect seconded her views so well, that before he had attained his fifteenth year, he was at least as learned as his noble aunt. At that tender age he already possessed as extensive a knowledge of History, Physics, Theology, Metaphysics, Morals, Politics, the art of War, Antiquities, and *Belles Lettres*, as any of the Heroes of *Grand Cyrus* could ever attain¹ [Book I, chap. ii].

But what most charmed her in her nephew was the uncommon desire which animated him, to imitate those sublime patterns, whose high deeds and moral virtues had transported him with admiration, and to which he had so familiarized his imagination, that he was at length persuaded, it would cost him no more pains to put them in practice, than it had already done to conceive the idea of them [Book I, chap. ii].

The natural ingenuity of his soul rendered him incapable of suspecting that he could be deceived. His imagination therefore was impressed with those chimerical beings which the poets and dealers in romance exhibited to him, just in the same manner as his senses received the impression which natural things made upon them. The more agreeable he found the marvellous and the supernatural, the more was he tempted to believe them true; and especially as he had no doubt of things the most incredible: For the ignorant believe every thing possible. In this manner, the poetical and enchanted world dispossessed his brain of the true; while the stars, elementary spirits, enchanters, and fairies, according to his system, were as certainly the movers of all nature, as gravity, attraction . . . are, in the system of a modern philosopher [Book I, chap. iii].

In addition to the books of chivalry on which he had been fed Don Sylvio one day discovered a large parcel of fairy tales, *Arabian Nights*, *Persian Tales*, and the like, which he fairly devoured:

He did not read, but he saw, he heard, he felt the whole. A system of nature, more beautiful and surprizing than all he had hitherto known, seemed to unfold itself to his view; and that mixture of the marvellous with the simplicity of nature, which characterizes most illusions of this sort, was to him an infallible mark of their truth [Book I, chap. iv].

¹ Quotations are from the first English translation (London, 1773), the text of which is based on that of the original German edition of 1764. Cf. *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XXXII, 225.

Donna Menzia tried to dissuade him, but in vain:

Enchantments, palaces of diamonds and rubies, princesses enchanted, or shut up in towers, or subterraneous palaces; together with those tender lovers, who, under the wonderous protection of a good fairy, escaped all the subtleties of a bad one; these, and the like, still kept in his imagination the quiet possession they had gained. Don Sylvio read nothing else 'Twas all his thoughts by day, and all his dreams by night' [Book I, chap. iv].

I have given in detail the description of the character and surroundings of Don Sylvio so that the identity of atmosphere in the two stories might be brought out: That a youth thus reared should fall in love with an enchanted princess, as yet unseen, was but natural, and when he one day caught a butterfly of singular beauty it was clear that this must be his enchanted princess, whom he accordingly released. The butterfly flew off, and while following it Don Sylvio stumbled upon a miniature set in brilliants. He realized that this must be the picture of his princess placed in his way by a grateful fairy.

In a subsequent dream there is a vision of salamanders and fairies, and Radiante, the queen of Salamanders, tells him to go in search of the blue butterfly in order to dissolve the enchantment and release the princess. "This great adventure is reserved for Thee. Lose no time, Don Sylvio." Accordingly he makes his preparations for the journey, on which he is to be accompanied by his squire Pedrillo and his little dog.

Meanwhile Donna Menzia has made an agreement to marry a lawyer of a nearby town, one of the stipulations being that Don Sylvio marry the lawyer's niece, whose fortune he has had in hand since her father's death. On an appointed day, Don Sylvio being still in the dark as to his aunt's project, uncle and niece arrive at the castle. Donna Mergelina, the niece, is pictured as a monster, short and stout, like Rigriche in the French story. Don Sylvio refuses to give up his princess and is imprisoned but he eventually escapes and sets out on his search for the butterfly. There are numerous adventures with salamanders, fairies, and the like, so that Don Sylvio, although never more than a few leagues from his castle, is as actually in the land of Romance as was Fan-Férédin. In a forest he and his squire rescue several young men, the escort of a young lady attacked

by kidnappers. Don Sylvio proceeds with his grateful friends to the castle of Don Eugenio, the head of the party, and the lover of Hyacinthe, the rescued lady, who in the end turns out to be Don Sylvio's long-lost sister. On the other hand, Donna Felicia, the sister of Don Eugenio, is the owner of the miniature, and Don Sylvio finally transfers his affections from the imaginary princess to her flesh-and-blood counterpart. The story thus ends in a double marriage of sister and brother with brother and sister.

In this skeleton outline I have limited myself, as in the case of the French work, to the story proper, omitting incidents and details which need not concern us here, as it is the parallelism of the fundamental plot that I have sought to bring out.

In both stories the orphaned hero, reared by a female relative and educated almost exclusively by the reading of tales of romance, sets out at the age of eighteen in search of romantic adventure, and to disenchant an enchanted person. He rescues a cavalier who turns out to be the lover of his rescuer's sister, while the hero in turn falls in love with the cavalier's sister, so that both stories end in a double marriage. In each case a short, thick-set, ugly woman tries to step in between the hero and his love, and in each case a miniature portrait plays an important part in bringing about the dénouement.

Instances of parallelism in incident are comparatively few on account of the fact that the French story has little action, its satire being mainly developed by the description of present and former conditions in the land of Romance. As Wieland's story is, on the contrary, one of action, the details had to be invented or borrowed elsewhere. One at least has its counterpart in the *Voyage*.

In the extravagant story of Biribinker, told by one of the company in order to cure Don Sylvio of his credulity, the hero finds himself within a tremendous whale, in whose interior there are lakes, islands, etc., and the rocks on the shore, without further motivation, are described as being soft as cushions. Fan-Férédin likewise gets into the bowels of the earth and at a certain place finds the rocks yielding to the touch. This condition is here motivated, however, by the statement that an unfortunate lover had been in those parts on the previous day and by his pitiful laments had caused the rocks to become softened. Furthermore, just as Don Sylvio, who gullibly

believes the Biribinker story, is finally told that it is a mere fabrication, so also Fan-Férédin breaks off suddenly with the statement that the whole thing is but an idle dream.

When we consider, finally, the aim and purpose of the French story, as expressed in the author's dedication, not much doubt remains that Wieland's plan and probably his original impulse to compose such a work came from the *Voyage merveilleux*; in the delineation of his characters, however, as well as in the arrangement and combination of his materials, Wieland followed the inspiration of his own genius.

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THE GAELIC "BALLAD OF THE MANTLE"

A well-known group of mediaeval narratives deals with a chastity-testing mantle which is brought to King Arthur's court and which causes shame to Guenevere and other ladies by whom it is donned. Only one of the women undergoes the probation successfully, thus proving herself virtuous.

Some thirty years ago Otto Warnatsch, after an examination of the available material, was convinced that, although the power of detecting human frailties is attributed to various inanimate objects in the folklore of many peoples, the peculiar form of the test occurring in the mantle poems originated in Celtic territory,¹ and more recent authorities have apparently favored the same view.² With regard, however, to the plot of which the mantle is the center, Warnatsch says, "Ihre literarische Gestaltung erlangte [die Mantelprobe] . . . erst in der altfranzösischen Poesie."³ That the mantle test found a literary setting which, although superficially similar to that in Arthurian romance, is independent of and perhaps antecedent to the Continental versions, is the hypothesis proposed in the present discussion.

It is clear at the outset that in a properly constructed narrative of the type outlined above the motive actuating the gift of the magic robe to Arthur should not only be adequately explained or implied but also be such as to comport with the character of the giver; otherwise the result of the trial loses in effectiveness, and the whole story becomes more or less frivolous and trivial. As will appear from the following discussion, the motive ascribed to the giver goes far toward establishing the relative primitiveness of the version in question.

¹ *Der Mantel* (Breslau, 1883), p. 58. The suggestion had already been made by Ferdinand Wolf, *Über die Lais*, etc. (Heldelberg, 1841), p. 176, and by F. A. Wulff, *Versions nordiques du fabliau français Le mantel mautailié* (ed., G. Cederschiöld and F. A. W., Lund, 1877), p. 100. Warnatsch also favored the theory of Celtic origin for the magic horn, which in a group of related documents is used by the men to test the virtue of their wives.

² Cf. Gaston Paris, *Romania*, XXVIII, 219, n. 3. See further F. A. Wulff, *Romania*, XIV (1885), 345; Miss L. A. Paton, *Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance* (Boston, 1903), pp. 111 ff.

³ Warnatsch, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

One of the oldest written accounts of the mantle test dates from the early thirteenth century and is contained in Ulrich von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet*,¹ the French original of which was carried to Germany in 1194. Here the magic garment is an otherworld object sent to Arthur's court by a *wise merminne* (vs. 5767; cf. vs. 193), the guardian of Lancelot. The purpose of the gift is to bring honor to Lancelot's wife, Iblis, who alone undergoes the test successfully after many other ladies, including Ginovere,² have made the trial to their shame.³ The *merminne* is to be identified with the Dame du Lac, whose attitude toward Lancelot is generally that of an excessively indulgent fairy godmother. That this conception is totally at variance with her true character has been abundantly demonstrated by Miss Paton.⁴ Originally the *fée's* benevolence is prompted by purely selfish motives. She humors the hero only that she herself may enjoy his love, and a fundamental law of her essentially jealous nature precludes the possibility of her favoring a mortal rival. Confusion of types, refinement of sentiment, or ignorance of tradition may cause her affection to be regarded as Platonic or disinterested, but the story of her relations with her mortal favorite begins with a scandal about a resourceful and amorous water-woman who never shares her lover with an earth-born maiden.⁵ It is therefore certain that the motive actuating the gift in Ulrich's poem is a relatively late and sophisticated invention.

The version of the mantle test usually regarded as most primitive is that found in the Old French *Conte du mantel*, which dates probably from the latter part of the twelfth century,⁶ and which in a thirteenth-century manuscript is designated as a *lai de Bretagne*.⁷ Here the mantle is of fairy workmanship, it is brought by a *vallet* from *une*

¹ *Lanzelet* (ed. K. A. Hahn, Frankfurt a/M., 1845), pp. 134 ff.

² The failure of the queen is surprising, since she has only *an den gedenken missevern*. As Child remarks, "Ulrich is very feeble here" (*Ballade*, I, 260, note).

³ In a German poem, dating probably from the early thirteenth century and preserved in fragmentary form, the gift of a virtue-testing mantle to Arthur seems also to have had for its purpose the exaltation of Lancelot's wife. See Warnatsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 8 ff., 107 f. In the Norse *Samsons saga Fagra*, which may be connected with the version represented by the *Lanzelet* (*Romania*, XIV, 353, n. 2), the mantle is manufactured by four *fées*, but its subsequent history is of no interest for our purpose. See Cederschiöld and Wulff, *Versions nordiques du fabliau français Le mantel mautailié*, pp. 90 f.

⁴ Miss Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 192 ff.

⁵ See *infra*, p. 657.

⁶ Cf. F. A. Wulff, *Versions nordiques*, p. 99; *Romania*, XIV, 355.

⁷ *Romania*, VIII (1879), 31; XIV (1885), 345. Gaston Paris believed that the *Conte* is the source of Ulrich's lost original (*Romania*, X, 477).

pucele de mout lointain païs, and its use results in shaming Guenevere and other ladies and in magnifying the virtue of the *amie* of Carados Briebraz,¹ but the gift lacks even the reason implied in the *Lanzelet*. The poet was obviously content to utilize the mantle as a means of publishing the queen's faithlessness and of glorifying Carados through the stainless character of that hero's mistress,² without troubling himself even to suggest the motive of the sender.³

Other versions of the mantle test which are important for our purpose may be introduced in connection with a prose rendering of the *Conte* found in a sixteenth-century manuscript and noteworthy because of the name of the sender. In this late *Manteau mal taillé* the mantle is sent to Arthur's court by Morgain la fée. Her motive is envy of Guenevere's beauty and jealousy of the queen's love for Lancelot—"qui fut cause la faire conspirer sur la reine et toutes ses dames, telle chose dont la feste fut despartye, et par aventure si la reine l'eust fait semondre à celle feste, l'inconvenient jamais ne fust advenu."⁴

Although anger at exclusion from a feast is also attributed to Arthur's sister⁵ as a reason for sending the troublesome gift in a version of the horn story found in a fifteenth-century *Fastnachtspiel*, "the motive of the slighted fay," as Miss Paton has shown,⁶ "is not indigenous to the Morgain saga, and . . . is to be regarded as the importation of an ordinary folk-lore theme into late material."

¹ Though Loth (*Les Mabinogion*, 2d ed., I [1913], 285, n. 1; 360, n. 1) regards the epithet Briebraz as Welsh in source, generally speaking the evidence for the Welsh origin of the story of the mantle is uncertain in date and suspicious in character. See Child, *Ballads*, I, 265 f.; Stern, *Ztsch. für celt. Phil.*, I (1896-97), 304 ff.

² In the *Lai du corn* the successful lady is the wife of Garadue (Caradoc) as she is of Craddocke in the English ballad of "The Boy and the Mantle" (Child, *Ballads*, No. 29). Cf. *Versions nordiques*, p. 88, n. 36.

³ The same is true of the early thirteenth-century Norse translation of a lost French version of the *Conte* preserved in the *Möttuls saga*, and of the fifteenth-century *Skikkju Rímur*, which latter goes back to the *Conte* plus some independent source. In both the *saga* and the *rímur* the mantle is an otherworld object. In the former the garment is brought to Arthur by a *svinn* from a *fríðasta maer* . . . *fjarri yðru landi*, the hero is Karadin, and the heroine is unnamed (*Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd samt Möttuls saga* [ed., G. Brynjulfson], Kjöbenhavn, 1878, pp. 223 ff.; *Versions nordiques*, pp. 8 ff.). In the *Skikkju Rímur* the mantle is brought by a man from a courteous lady of great power (*hennar líki er valla nú*). The test results in the exoneration of Kardon, the mistress of Kallgras (*Versions nordiques*, pp. 58 ff.). On the forms of the names, see *Versions nordiques*, pp. 85, n. 19; 88, n. 36. See further Child, *Ballads*, I, 260 f. In the English ballad Gueneuer and other ladies fail to meet the test, and Craddocke's wife wins after she confesses having kissed her husband once before marriage, but nothing is said of the sender and the only suggestion of a motive is found in the boy's request that Arthur give the mantle to his "comely queene."

⁴ Legrand d'Aussy, *Fabliaux ou Contes* (Paris, 1829), I, 126 ff.

⁵ Called *königin von Zipper*. Cf. Warnatsch, *op. cit.*, p. 67; Miss Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁶ Miss Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

Morgain's jealousy of the love between Lancelot and Guenevere should also be looked upon as an element introduced into the story at a comparatively recent period, after the famous liaison had become an established fact in romance.¹ Equally untrustworthy is the motivation in a fifteenth-century *Meistergesang*, which represents Arthur's *swesterkint*, Laneth, as receiving from a friendly dwarf a mantle with which she revenges herself on Guenevere for casting her off and aspersing her character.² After examining a large number of romances in which Morgain's hatred of Arthur and his wife is ascribed to various causes,³ Miss Paton, guided by the doubtful evidence of an episode treating of Morgain and a dangerous mantle in the Huth *Merlin* and in *Malory*, was led to suspect that the gift to Arthur of such a garment was attributed to Morgain before the sixteenth century, but the data at her disposal were too scanty to create more than a slight probability pointing in that direction.⁴

With these preliminary observations it is appropriate to examine a group of documents involving the mantle test but falling outside the field of Arthurian romance.

The Gaelic "Ballad of the Mantle" has been popular in Scotland for more than three centuries. The oldest copy, preserved in the early sixteenth-century Scottish Gaelic *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, was written down probably about the year 1500.⁵ A second version, in Irish, occurs in the seventeenth-century *Duanaire Finn*.⁶ A similar Irish poem, recorded in the eighteenth century, exists in the Edinburgh MS 54.⁷ Other late redactions have been discovered in

¹ Cf. Miss Paton, *loc. cit.* Morgain's desire to reveal Guenevere's guilty love is also the motive in certain versions of the horn story. See below, n. 4.

² Child, *Ballads*, I, 261. Cf. Miss Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 61 ff. In *Der Luneten Mantel* a fifteenth-century *Fastnachtspiel*, Luneta uses the mantle to stir up trouble at Arthur's court, but no excuse is assigned for her action. See *Bibl. des litt. Vereins in Stuttgart*, XXIX (1853), pp. 664 ff.

³ In the *Lai du corn* (ca. 1150) and its congeners, which are closely related to the mantle group and which, with it, doubtless go back ultimately to an earlier popular account of a chastity test, Guenevere and Caradoc stand out, but the motive of the gift is omitted or is as flimsy as those indicated above. Cf. Child, *Ballads*, I, 262, note.

⁴ Morgain is the sender of the virtue-testing drinking vessel in the prose *Tristan* (Löseth, § 47), in *Malory* (Book VIII, chap. xxiv), and in the *Orlando Furioso* (XLIII, 28 ff.). See Miss Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 105; Warnatsch, *op. cit.*, p. 134, n. 1.

⁵ Cf. Stern, *Ztsch. für celt. Phil.* I, 294 ff., which see for the text here used. For other editions, see *Mod. Phil.*, I (1903), 145, notes.

⁶ Ed., Stern, *op. cit.*, I, 301 f.

⁷ Ed., A. Macbain and J. Kennedy, *Reliquiae Celticae* (Inverness, 1892), I, pp. 116 ff. Cf. Mackinnon, *Descr. Cat. of Gaelic Manuscripts* (Edinburgh, 1912), p. 163.

seven manuscripts in the library of the Royal Irish Academy¹ and in two manuscripts in the library of Harvard University.²

The Gaelic version of the mantle test is connected with the so-called "Fenian," more properly the Ossianic, cycle—a body of epic tradition now recognized as having had its beginnings in Ireland prior to the Scandinavian invasion (795).³ The main thread of the narrative, which tends to grow long-winded in certain late manuscripts,⁴ runs as follows:

Finn mac Cumhail and several of the *Fían*, with their respective wives, are carousing in the stronghold of Almhain. The women get tipsy and begin to boast of their virtue. While they are thus engaged there enters a beautiful girl wearing a mantle. On being questioned by Finn regarding the garment she replies that it has the power of revealing the unfaithfulness of women. In turn the wives put it on, but all except one find that it does not fit, and are severely dealt with by their enraged lords. Finn, on perceiving that the mantle, when donned by his own wife, Maighinis, rises above her ears and will not come down, slays her. Mac Reithe's wife, whose person the garment does not quite cover, confesses having given one kiss to Diarmuid (the Adonis of the *Fían*) and thus escapes punishment.⁵ Finally the visitor, after announcing her name and asserting that she has never been guilty of incontinence except with Finn himself, takes her mantle and departs, accompanied by Finn's curse for the trouble she has brought.

Notwithstanding the absence of early manuscript evidence for the Gaelic "Ballad of the Mantle" and its general structural similarity to the non-Celtic versions,⁶ it cannot be regarded as a simple revamping of Arthurian tradition by the substitution of Ossianic

¹ Cf. *Mod. Phil.*, X (1913), 291, n. 1. There seems to be another copy in MS *Egerton 175* (B.M.). Cf. *Mod. Phil.*, I, 146, n. 4. J. F. Campbell appears to have known the story in Irish. See his *Leabhar na Feinne*, (London, 1872), p. 138.

² *Mod. Phil.*, I, 152, and note.

³ Zimmer's once famous views regarding the Scandinavian influences on the Ossianic cycle are now largely discredited. See *Mod. Phil.*, XVI (1918), 442.

⁴ Cf. *Mod. Phil.*, I, 150.

⁵ In the Harvard and Edinburgh MSS and in the *Duanaire Finn*, Ossin's wife also tries on the mantle, but her complete exoneration, as recorded in the Harvard copies, is probably late. See Robinson, *Mod. Phil.*, I, 151 f.

⁶ A noteworthy instance of parallelism in detail occurs in the English ballad. Sir Craddocke's wife, like Mac Reithe's, finds that the mantle fits smoothly except for her toes. Upon her confessing a small fault, the garment covers her figure completely. Cf. Robinson, *Mod. Phil.*, I, 146.

names.¹ As Mac Neill has pointed out,² the *argumentum ex silentio* is especially liable to be fallacious in matters dealing with Ossianic tradition of the earliest period. Opposed to the theory of mere borrowing are, moreover, the popularity of the ballad in British Gaeldom (a territory in which native epics were ever preferred before the romances of the Round Table),³ the highly barbaric nature of the action,⁴ and the nicety with which the plot is fitted into the complicated framework of the Ossianic cycle.

One of the most striking evidences of this careful fitting is to be observed in the character of the owner of the mantle and the reason for her behavior. Fortunately there is abundant evidence that those who heard the Gaelic ballad in its earliest preserved form perfectly understood the cause of the visitor's malignity and that in their eyes her action was justified by the best traditions of epic procedure. The words in which she reveals her identity in the oldest text are as follows:

Tabhraidh mo bhrat domh
is me nighean an Deirg ghráin,
nocha dearnus do locht
ach feis re Fionn faobhar-nocht.

Give me my mantle
I am the daughter of Derg (Red) the fierce,
who never committed any fault
except sleeping with Finn of the naked sword.⁵

Bla, the daughter of Derg, or, as she is also called, Blái Derg, is well known elsewhere in Ossianic tradition as the mother of Ossín (Ossian). In the *Acallamh na Senórach*,⁶ a frame story dating from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century and embodying much

¹ See especially Gaston Paris' criticism (*Romania*, XXVIII, 219, n. 3) of Stern's opinion (*Ztsch. für celt. Phil.*, I, 306 ff.).

² *Duanaire Finn*, Introduction.

³ This assertion stands, even in the face of Zimmer's list of Irish translations of Continental romances (*Gött. gel. Anz.* [1890], p. 503). Cf. *Mod. Phil.*, X, 299, n. 1; Henderson, *Misc. Presented to Kuno Meyer*, Halle, 1912, 18 ff.

⁴ In only one Continental version, the *Skikkju Rimur*, does the severity of the punishment inflicted upon the guilty wives at all approximate that in the Celtic ballad. In the Norse account the offenders are banished from court. Cf. *Versions nordiques*, p. 99.

⁵ Essentially the same statement is found in the Irish text of the Edinburgh manuscript (*Reliq. Celt.*, I, 117 f.). In the corresponding stanza of the Harvard manuscript printed by Robinson (*Mod. Phil.*, I, 157), the woman announces that she has never had to do with any man except her own husband, but it appears from the second line that the whole stanza is ultimately derived from one resembling that quoted from the Edinburgh text. The references to Derg and Finn are missing in the *Duanaire Finn*.

⁶ Ed., Whitley Stokes, *Irische Texte*, IV, 1 (1900), p. 2. Cf. Stern, *op. cit.*, III, 614.

ancient Irish lore, Ossín, on departing from Cailte, his ancient companion in arms, goes to *Sídh Ochta Cleitigh*, *bhail a raibhe a mháthair*, *Bla inghen Déirc Dhianscothaig*, "the fairy-mound of O.C., where was his mother, Bla, the daughter of Derg of the Vehement Words." According to the Franciscan manuscript of the *Acallamh*, Ossín's destination was *Stodh Ochtair*, a reading which is supported by an Ossianic ballad, where the hero is said to have been the son of Derg's daughter and to have been born at *Cluan Iochtair*.¹ In another Irish ballad Ossín is called the son of Derg's daughter as though his ancestry were a matter of common knowledge.²

Epic tradition has ever delighted to attribute to its heroes amours with supernatural beings, and Ossianic story is particularly fond of representing Finn and his most famous companions as attracting the love of women from the other world.³ Among Finn's fairy paramours Blái occupies a prominent position, both because of her illustrious son and because of the circumstances attending her relations with the father. The earliest reference to the occurrence is contained in an eleventh-century poem found in the *Book of Leinster*⁴ (compiled ca. 1150). The poet, after alluding to the mother of Diarmuid, adds:

Blái Derg din Banbai braiss,
máthair Ossfne amnaiss.

Ticed [Blái] i rricht eilte
hi comdail na díbergge,
co ndernad Ossfne de,
ri Blái nDeirgg i rricht eilte.

Moreover, Blái Derg of swift Banba
was the mother of Ossín the fierce.

Blái used to come in the form of a deer
into the assembly of the robbers,
so that consequently Ossín was begotten
upon Blái [daughter] of Derg in deer form.

¹ *Transactions of the Ossianic Society*, I (1854), 12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 33. Cf. *Irish Texts*, IV, 1 (1900), p. 71; *Sil. Gad.*, I, 149; *The Dean of Lismore's Book* (ed., McLauchlan, Edinburgh, 1862), Text, p. 50.

³ See, for example, *Todd Lect. Ser.*, XVI (1910), 48; *Rev. cell.*, XV (1894), 334; XVI, 147; *Irish Texts Society*, VII (1904), 145 f.

⁴ *Facsimile*, 164, Col. 1, upper margin. Cf. *Todd Lect. Ser.*, XVI (1910), xxvi; Nutt, *Voyage of Bran*, I (1895), 151 f. Hogan mistakes Blái nDeirg for a place-name (*Onomasticon Gadelicum*, s.v.).

The name Ossín is a genuine Irish diminutive of the word *oss*, "deer,"¹ and the story of the great warrior-poet's birth, first told to support the etymology, belongs to that extremely ancient class of primitive folk-myths which deals with animal marriage.² Moreover, the most recent investigations have demonstrated that the formation of the epic cycle clustering about Finn and his half-outlaw band of professional warriors began at least as early as the eighth century after Christ.³ It may therefore well be that the story of Ossín's birth, so briefly summarized by an eleventh-century Irish genealogist of antiquarian tastes, formed part of the earliest Ossianic epic.⁴ Finally the genuinely popular character of the tradition is shown by the tenacity with which it holds its place in modern folklore. That Ossín was the offspring of Finn and a deer was known to the Irish peasantry of the nineteenth century;⁵ eight modern Highland Scottish accounts are referred to by J. F. Campbell,⁶ and in a woman's "waulking" song from the Western Isles, of which fourteen versions were known to Campbell, Ossín addresses his mother, who is in the form of a deer, and warns her against the hounds. Both the Irish and the Scottish versions show the effects of rationalization and sentimentalism in representing the mother as a persecuted maiden temporarily under a druidic spell⁷ instead of as a supernatural being who assumes the form of a doe in order to approach her lover, but her original character is obvious.

¹ Cf. Meyer, *Todd Lect. Ser.*, XVI, xviii, n. 3. As Meyer points out, Zimmer is wrong in claiming that the word is an Irish loan from the Norse *Ássin*.

² Cf. *Trans. Oss. Soc.*, II (1855), 161 ff. Celtic tradition constantly represents the fairy folk as associated with deer or as using these animals for disguise. See J. F. Campbell, *Pop. Tales*, II (1890), 120; J. G. Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands* (Glasgow, 1900), pp. 22, 27, 28; Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, Oxon., I (1909), cxliii f.; Drummond, *Ancient Irish Minstrelsy* (Dublin, 1852), p. 52; *Transactions of the Ossianic Society*, II (1855), 169; IV (1859), 235 ff.

³ See the studies of Mac Neill and Meyer, referred to above, pp. 654, n. 2; 656, n. 1.

⁴ Cf. Nutt, *op. cit.*, II, 88.

⁵ Cf. Patrick Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* (London, 1866), pp. 235 ff.

⁶ *Leabhar na Feinne*, p. 198.

⁷ In the Irish account the woman is called Saav (*recte* Sadb), apparently by confusion with one of Finn's mortal wives, although it is worth noting that in the *Acallamh na Senórach*, Finn's wife Sadb is said to have been the daughter of the fairy chieftain Bodb Derg (*Silva Gadelica*, II, 172 ff.). In certain Scottish versions Ossín's mother is said to have been the famous Gráinne, whose attitude toward Finn, as established by the best tradition, precludes the legitimacy of her appearing in the rôle of Ossín's mother (cf. J. F. Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 199; *Celt. Rev.*, I, 205). The Scottish versions, which represent the child as begotten upon the woman while she is wandering about as a doe, are more primitive than the Irish, where the machinery of the story provides for her restoration to human form long enough for the child to be conceived.

From the evidence presented above it is clear that for centuries the canny ones among the folk, who comprehend the ways of their own literature much better than many cultured purveyors of popular themes, have understood that the reciter of the Gaelic "Ballad of the Mantle" was raking up a scandal about Finn and a fairy woman.¹

That Blái's specific motive was recognized by those who heard the ballad in its original form may also be demonstrated from an examination of Celtic tradition. The inspiration of her malice is to be sought, not in such suspicious motives as are suggested in early Continental versions of the mantle story, but in an ancient and widespread folklore formula which may be stated as follows: An other-world woman bestows her affection upon a mortal but, on finding her offer rejected or on being abandoned for a rival, hates as violently as once she loved.

Among the various types of heroine depicted in mediaeval literature the fairy mistress of early Irish epic and romance is noteworthy for her capricious and jealous nature. When crossed in love, she is as vengeful as any fair-haired virago among the barbaric folk to whose untutored imagination she owes her existence, and she has retained her reputation down to recent times.² Otherworld women who take vengeance for rejected love are found not only in the sagas of the Ulster cycle, the most extensively preserved body of ancient Irish tradition, but also in various detached romances,³ and the large number of examples to be found in Ossianic literature shows how extremely popular was the theme during the Middle and Modern Irish periods. Of the numerous stories of supernatural beings who proffer their love to the heroes of the *Fian*, several picture Finn as suffering from the jealousy of his would-be mistress, or as escaping her wiles only by the exercise of his unusual powers of divination. A well-known Ossianic story tells of two fairy women, sisters, who simultaneously offer their love to Finn. One, perceiving that the other is about to outbid her for the hero's affections, transforms herself into a deer, lures Finn to a magic lake, and changes him into a

¹ Child was on the right track when he spoke of Derg's daughter in the ballad as "certainly a wife of Finn." (*Ballads*, I, 262).

² See *Trans. Oss. Soc.*, II, 102.

³ Miss Paton's discussion (*Fairy Mythology*, pp. 4 ff., 21 f., 48) is based chiefly on material drawn from the Ulster cycle. See further Thurneysen, *Sagen aus dem alten Irland*, pp. 81 ff.; *Rev. cel.*, XXIII (1902), 396 ff.; *Mod. Phil.*, XII (1915), 641, n. 2.

decrepit, white-haired man.¹ In the *Acallamh na Senórach* an other-world woman offers her love to Finn, but on such extraordinary conditions that her proposal is declined, whereupon she gives Finn a potion which causes a frenzy.² The list might be considerably extended,³ but the episodes here noted sufficiently illustrate the theme of fairy jealousy in early Irish literature. Although it is not clear why Maighinis, among the various wives assigned by tradition to the uxorious Finn, was chosen by popular fancy as the subject of the mantle test, the considerations just set forth leave no room for doubt that the motive which underlies Blái's action [and which occurred at once to the hearers of the ballad as the explanation of her presence in the story, is that indicated in the formula outlined above; namely, vengeance for discarded love and jealousy of a favored rival. This conclusion, if correct, goes far toward establishing the independent character of the Gaelic ballad, for, of all the mediaeval versions of the mantle test, the Celtic furnishes the most primitive and, to the student of popular origins, the most satisfactory inciting motive for the story. Moreover, the remarkable precision with which, even in matters of detail, the character and actions, not only of Blái but of the remaining personages, are adapted to the established conventions of the Ossianic epic, the brutality of the men, and the indelicacy of the women, with never an indication of past courtly history, all tend to discredit the otherwise conceivable assumption⁴ that the Gaelic ballad is a mere rifacimento of any preserved non-Celtic version. It may be added that, however late the connection of Morgain with the mantle test may have been, the establishment of the independent character of the Gaelic version lends additional color to Miss Paton's theory that the relations between Morgain and Arthur find their most satisfactory explanation in ancient Celtic accounts of the fairy amours of epic heroes.⁵

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¹ A summary of the story is given in the *Feis Tighe Chonain Chinn-Shléibhe*, a late compilation of traditional materials (*Trans. Oss. Soc.*, II, 168 ff.), and is connected with the account given in the *Seilg Shléibhe g-Cuilinn*, an Ossianic ballad which has met with wide popularity (*Trans. Oss. Soc.*, IV [1861], 2 ff.).

² *Irische Texte*, IV, 1, p. 135.

³ For other examples from Ossianic tradition, see *Trans. Oss. Soc.*, II, 161 ff.; *Rev. celt.*, XV (1894), 334.

⁴ Cf. Stern, *op. cit.*, I, 306 ff.

⁵ Cf. *Mod. Phil.*, XII, 605, n. 4.

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CONTENTS FOR APRIL 1919

No. 12

Chaucer and Lucan's <i>Pharsalia</i>	Edgar Finley Shannon	609
Coleridge as a Philologist	James Holly Hanford	615
The Sources of Wieland's <i>Don Sylvio</i>	W. Kurrelmeyer	637
The Gaelic "Ballad of the Mantle"	Tom Peete Cross	649

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Starved Rock State Park and Its Environs

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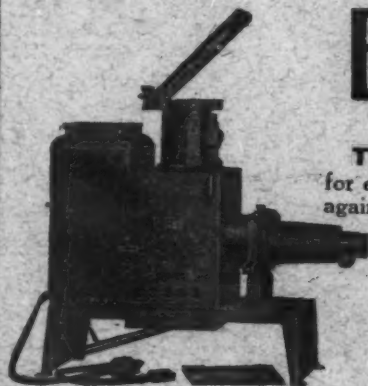
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